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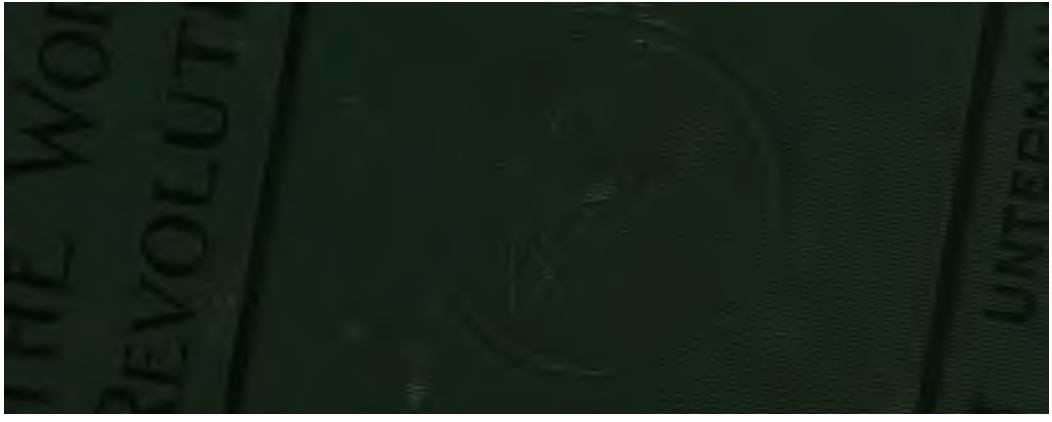

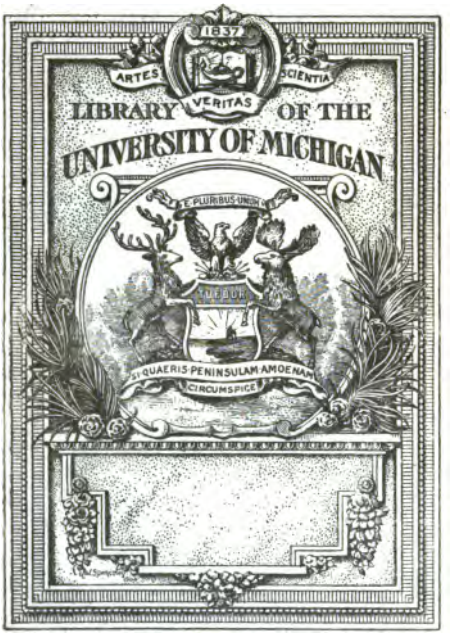
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THE WORLD'S REVOLUTIONS

BY

ERNEST UNTERMANN
Author of "Science and Revolution"

CHICAGO
CHARLES H. KERR & COMPANY
1909

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THE WORLD'S REVOLUTIONS

I. The Individual and the Universe

Have you ever been adrift on the ocean in an open boat? Have you ever been all alone in that mighty solitude of sky and sea, with only one-half inch of wood between your life and a salt water grave five thousand fathoms deep? Did you ever realize what it means to have nothing but your own isolated brain, bone and muscle to pit against the overwhelming forces of nature?

One man, and one tiny boat, against a thousand miles of heaving brine and the unbridled winds of heaven!

One brain to foresee and overcome the storms, the giant waves, the scorching heat of the noonday sun, the drenching rains, the treacherous currents, the cold and lonely nights, and to control the wild ravings of your animal body that would turn you against yourself, that would prompt you to devour your scant supply of food and drink in a few mad feasts.

One pair of tired eyes to watch for the faint blue outline of some welcome island, for the dim shadow of some far-off sail looming through the mist, or for the curling wreath of some steamer's smoke tracing a grey streak across the fleecy clouds above the sky-line.

One right arm to hold the heavy steering oar, one left hand to pull the straining sheet of the bulging sail.

And so on from day to day, from week to week, keeping your boat to her course with unfaltering perseverance, denying a hearing to despair, intent on only one thing — to come out victor against all odds and land in some place where you may pursue your normal development.

One lone individual against the universe! Individualism in its logical extreme!

Individualism? No! A complete refutation of the individualist philosophy! Let the individualist thinker try this experience. It is a sure cure against the rampant conceit of the Ego.

But if I live to tell this tale, if I won against the sea, the winds, the solitude, and against my own weaknesses, if I landed safely on an inhabited island of the Pacific ocean, did I not owe

my victory to my own unaided efforts, to my own magnificent personality?

Was it not I who finally stood panting on the white sands of Mindanao's east coast and hurled an exultant cry of defiance at the wild northeast monsoon and the white surf dashing and roaring against the coral reef two miles out, through which I had found an opening into the calm lagoon?

I? When I fell down upon the warm sand, sobbing like a child in a violent reaction of feeling, my first thought was of her whose blood was coursing through my veins and whose image had cheered and inspired me through it all — my mother. It was she who, though almost ten thousand miles away, had struggled, and feared, and hoped, and won by my side, who rejoiced with me over my escape, and whose love would some day draw me back to her.

And my next thought was of that other, whose limbs and chest and shoulders and forehead served as models of mine, and whose blood mingled in my veins with that of my mother — my father. It was he whose muscles and sinews and bones and undaunted tenacity proved a match for the winds and waters of the western Pacific.

And mother and father, whose gifts did they bequeath to me? Those of two other mothers and two other fathers. And behind these four, there stretches away through the long centuries a many-branched ancestral procession, which loses itself, I know not where, in the deep womb of indistinct humanity.

When my flesh and blood jumped ashore on Mindanao beach, the flesh and blood of millions of ancestors landed with me. It was the past, present, and future of humanity, crystallized in one passing personality, which sobbed on that forlorn coast in the Philippine Islands, happy to have rescued one line of human evolution from premature interruption.

Of course, it was all done through me. But how small did my twenty-one years of personal blood-and-flesh reproduction appear compared to that inconceivably long line of blood flowing from tree-dwelling man in the first stage of the Tertiary age, over one million years ago, down to my own time!

Nor was the contribution of mere flesh and blood to my physical personality all that I owed to others.

There was, first of all, my boat. It was as much a product of unknown millions as I was.

Those thin wooden boards, which had carried me safely over the raging deep, were once green and living parts of some Oregon pine. The sap, which had run up and down through them, was the gift of a primeval stream of plant juice which had been flowing for ages and ages through an immeasurable line of plant ancestors. Hundreds of diligent hands had wrought and labored, cutting down that pine, rafting it, hewing it, and feeding it into the saw-mill. Others had helped to saw it into boards, pile it up to let it season, cart it to the railway, and load it on the train. The train crew had carried it to the station where the ship-yard was, and there a new line of busy hands had handled it. Finally, the boards had been sawed and bent into shape, and there they were, giving my boat that graceful outline and buoyancy which made it a thing of beauty and joy to me.

Then there were the stout mast and the supple oars, which had come from other trees and gone through another long line of human hands.

And the paint and varnish which protected the fiber of the wood opened up another dazzling line of human activity and ingenuity.

There lay my sail, still wet from the spray of the bellowing surf over which it had swept in our

last mad rush through the breakers. What a long procession of helping hands it represented; from the sowing, cultivating, and harvesting of the cotton, the spinning of the yarn, the weaving of the cloth, the cutting and sewing into its present shape, with all the intermediate processes of trading and transporting!

That iron foot of the bow, now resting on the wet sand; that copper rivet glistening in the sun where gravel, and coral, and the wash of the sea had scraped away the paint, and those oar locks of cast iron, with their rust-proof coat of galvanized metal, conjured up other human industries made possible only by thousands of years of invention and improvement. Without fire, coal mines, ore mines, and smelting and casting processes, these would not have been there.

And that old, battered tin pail, with its spun-yarn lanyard; where would I have been without them, when the green combers threatened to swamp my boat? Those weather-worn and bleached ropes of manila fiber, which served as a sheet and as halyards for my sail, and which had helped me to steer my course as well as that twelve-foot oar had done; how many different men of different nationalities had toiled before I handled them?

INDIVIDUAL AND UNIVERSE

I did not make the woolen sweater that had kept me warm, nor the oil-clothes that had protected me against the rain and salt-spray, nor the rubber boots that were proof against the water and the sharp gravel. Every stitch of clothes I possessed was the work of others whom I had never known. And so were the ship's biscuits and the last can of salmon that constituted my supply of food.

All these things were there only because the united efforts of millions had been spent for a million years in producing the tools and materials, which were the indispensable requirements for the manufacture of food, clothing, shelter, and means of transportation. And unless these united efforts of millions continued, these things would soon be worn out or consumed, and I would be more helpless than the crabs which crawled around me in search of their prey.

But my brain at least — no, it was not all my own, either. The blood of the past millions had left its traces also in it. And the knowledge which was stored up in it, was it not due to those who had taught me, and did not those teachers of mine owe their experience and wisdom to the accumulated study of all humanity?

I, too, accumulated some experience and new

knowledge in my own life, but every bit of it was built on a foundation which others had laid for me, and my life would serve to fertilize the lives of those with whom I might come in contact, and who would be my offspring, physically or intellectually.

Had not millions helped to build up human language and thought? The polar star, the southern cross, the sun, and the moon, were my friends only because others had taught me to understand their position and movements. My familiarity with the compass, my knowledge of geography, my ability to find my way across the boundless ocean, to calculate the drift of currents, and to reckon with the nature of the monsoon winds — could I have had them without the stored-up intelligence of the past?

And if my mind were to remain isolated on this tropical island, without the stimulating interchange of thought with other advanced minds, could I ever become intellectually what I might be among men of my own race? I might scatter the seeds of a new intelligence among the barbarian aborigines of Mindanao, but my own mental development would lack the support of the white man's mind.

But here or there, my personality had to ex-

press itself with the means which it found at hand, and to go through the joys and travails of existence as my environment would dictate.

How hard I had fought to preserve my existence in human form! And all the time, while I thought I was struggling alone, millions of allies had struggled to help me. The universe had not all been against me.

The mighty ocean of air, with its swift winds, had not only threatened my life, but also filled my sail and carried me safely into this placid lagoon. And the oxygen in it had expanded my lungs and given vigor to my blood. Nor was human life alone conditioned on the atmosphere. The trees and flowers and the animal denizens of the coast-jungle at my back required it as much as I did. Aye, the very sands on which I stood, and the waters all around me, were permeated by this living breath.

Neither had the waters been always my enemies. The same ocean that had raged furiously around my boat had also borne it along pleasantly. The rains that had drenched me to the skin had also quenched my thirst and bathed my body. And yonder flowers greeted the cool showers as gladly as my parched lips did. Those crabs, and fishes, and turtles, and those myriads

of coral animals out there at the reef, depend for their lives on the sea, yet not one whit more than the peasants on the Russian steppes or the herders on the inland mountains, one thousand miles away from the ocean. Without the oceans, the climate and seasons on any part of the globe would not be what they are.

And still closer bonds make me kin to the land, the sea, the air, and to their animals and plants. The air and the ocean are indispensable to one another, and both feel the kiss of the sun. Without that kiss, without light and heat, the earth could not have given birth to its teeming life. It is only because land and sea and air are wedded in the burning embraces of the sun that mankind, animals and plants live. My blood, like that of the animals, and the juices of the plants, all came from the same primordial mother. Even to this day crystals, flowers, animals, and men, all develop out of one single cell, and the same primitive sensations stir their young souls. Take away light, air, land, and water, and you rob my soul of its life as surely as you crush the souls of all other earthborn things.

Yes, I had many friends in the universe. Some of them were so mysterious and silent that I should never have suspected their presence had

not others, wiser than I, shown them to me. In my lonely nights on the ocean, I had seen some sudden light flaring up far away in the dark recesses of the starry firmament. I knew then that, billions of miles away, a world had suddenly closed its career. Just as I had been struggling against the elements, and yet was part and parcel of them, so a world had struggled far away on the remotest boundaries of the universe, as we know it, and lost the fight. And yet millions of others survived, and while I had seen the destruction of one, I watched the luminous nebulae in the broad Milky Way, which were worlds in the first stages of their formation. While some worlds were scattering their atoms through space, others were gathering and concentrating them. And like a giant copy of my own little craft, our globe was floating through it all on the endless ocean of the universe. And though the thoughts of the things on the surface of this world could not communicate directly with those of other worlds, yet all these worlds were in touch with one another, attracting or repelling each other across millions of miles of space, rallying around a common sun in defense against the invasions of roving citizens of the skies, or rejecting affiliation with the solar sys-

tems known to us and listening to the call of their affinities in unknown recesses of the heavenly deep, to where man's boldest imagination had never strayed.

These same silent forces that make worlds kin or foe are also active in every feeling thing from the center to the surface of this globe and of all others. In response to the attraction of the sun and moon the boiling lava rises in the womb of the earth when the tides of the ocean rise. And other silent allies help these forces to draw the nourishing juices from the soil up into the organs of the plants. The knowing ones among men are well aware that the moon and the sun affect the plant and animal life of this globe profoundly, even to the most intimate functions of the organs of the body.

This old earth of ours changes its structure as gradually as our own bodies do, and as the earth changes, so do all things on and in the earth change with it.

Revolution of world against world, of water against fire, of land against sea and sea against land; revolution of these against the plants and animals and mankind; revolutions of these against one another: this is the endless chain of the world-process. Who will survive?

Yet in the midst of this struggle there is much mutual help. It is not all hate. From the time that primitive cells clustered together into a colony, love and mutual assistance mitigated the struggle for life in many ways. Self-defense compelled men and things to exterminate others. Yet the care for their mates and their offspring planted the germs of comradeship.

As man's powers grow, so the circle of comradeship is gradually extended. It does not stop at human comradeship. First man protected some animals and plants for his own interest against all others. Gradually they combined their forces to rule this globe. But not all plants and animals serve man as food. He selects some to cheer him by their colors, their voices, or their affection. And so the bonds of love embrace more and more forms in the world. As these bonds grow, the animal and plant pets of man develop a greater beauty or a greater intellectual reach.

So I stood on the silent beach of Mindanao and watched the gold of the evening fade away into cooler tints. And while the dark shadows crept over the dense swamp, the white beach, the green lagoon, the dark-blue ocean beyond the reef, merging them all in one opaque color, I

wondered whether the gloom would settle down some day just like that on the whole world. And I thought of the birth and death of those other worlds.

But beyond this line human intelligence has never penetrated. We know only that the universe has evolved its myriad forms, of which the human mind or soul is an inseparable part, by natural processes which follow one out of the other. But what was the first world-process, and whence came the material for it?

Faith has one answer, and science another. But both answers amount to the same thing: We do not know. Faith says in addition: We shall never know. Science cries: We will know all, and we shall!

But soon friend Sleep took me in his arms and blotted these questions from my mind. When the moon rose and painted a silvery wake over lagoon and ocean a lonely sailor slumbered in the bottom of his boat, rolled up in his sail, and the thick foliage of a deep cove in the swamp hid him from view. And yet he was not alone. The universe was in him and he was in the universe. And neither his body nor the universe were perfectly at rest. Within him, a ceaseless change of tissue, an endless struggle of

ideas, even though he was not conscious of them; without him, the same endless struggle throughout the universe. Within him and without him, the world's revolutions went their way. And the tiny voice of some strident insect sang the eternal melody: "There is no rest."

II. Primitive Human Revolutions

The first human revolution was the birth of a human being. When and where did that happen?

Some of you have read the Mosaic account of the birth of Adam and Eve and some of you may believe every word of this account literally. If that is so, do not let me disturb your mental repose. Do not read any further if you are afraid that it might hurt you to learn what others, who do not believe every word of the Mosaic story, think about the origin of the first human being.

There may be others among you who do not believe that the Mosaic account is literally true, and who are inclined to think that it is an allegory and must be interpreted in modern language before its true meaning can be grasped. I have no quarrel with those who think so any more than I have with those who think that the Mosaic account is literally true. And if they do not care to listen to a dissenting opinion they, too, had better stop right here.

But while I do not quarrel with those who believe in the Mosaic account, or who interpret it according to their own fancies, I have an opinion of my own about the origin of the first human being. And there may be many believers in the Bible who are American enough to hear all sides, even if they do not agree with the other sides. It is to these, and to the many who do not believe in the Mosaic story, that I should like to speak.

The ancient Bible-writers claimed to be inspired by a supreme being, a personality unseen, yet felt. The modern interpreters of the Bible think this was only another way of saying that the ancient Bible-writers had studied nature, and that this study inspired them to write about it.

Now, I don't mind reading the Bible once in a while, because it contains much valuable historical material. But I also like to read the book of nature, which the ancient Bible-writers had to study before they could write the Bible. Of course, I don't claim to be inspired by anything else but natural impulses when I write down what I see in the world about me. I simply try to interpret the language which nature speaks to me, and my opinion is not based on my own observations alone, but on the studies of many clear-headed men, who have been, or still are, very

close to nature, and who see nature outside, as well as inside, of themselves.

Neither I, nor any of the men who think as I do, have been able to find in the book of nature some of the things which the ancient Bible-writers claimed to see in it. On the other hand, we have found many things in the book of nature which the Bible-writers did not see, and some of these things show that the Bible-writers were mistaken about some of the things which they claimed to have learned through revelation by a supreme being.

For instance, the Mosaic account places the age of the world at about 5,000 years, and assumes that the rocks, the plants, and the animals of this globe were created in six days, together with all the stars, the sun, and all other things in the universe, and that all of these things have since always been what they are and will always remain so. But when the men who studied the formation of the rocks and the interior of the earth began to dig down deep into the crust of this globe, they found remains of animals and plants that no longer exist. And the deeper down they dug the stranger became the animal and plant remains which were imbedded in the sand, clay, lime-rock, etc. They also discovered

that the earth consisted of layers of many different kinds of minerals, and each one of these layers had at a certain time been on the surface, and had carried its own animal and plant life, so that none of the layers which are under the present surface-layer contain any remains of animals and plants now living. These different layers of the earth have been shoved about, turned upside down, split and torn, melted by fire, washed by water, smoothed by huge mountains of ice, and some of them have been crystallized. And when the students of the earth calculated how long it must have taken before these different layers of the earth's crust could assume their present shape, position and composition, by comparing them and the processes that made them with changes that are now taking place in the surface and in the interior of the earth before our own eyes, they found that alone the formation of the layer directly below that on which we now live must have required over one million years. And this is one of the thinnest layers of the many which the students of the earth have found. How many millions of years were required for the formation of the other layers, and how did the earth look before they were there?

These are interesting questions, and they have

been answered by science more or less accurately. But they do not fall directly within the scope of this study. I must confine myself to the questions that deal with human beings and the periods in which they lived and live. So I cannot discuss any of the cosmic and terrestrial revolutions that took place before the appearance of man.

The Mosaic account assumes that the very first pair of human beings, who are the primeval ancestors of all the millions that lived after them, were made by a supreme being after his own model, and that this model is exactly the one which the modern white people represent. But the students of the earth found among the animals and plants of a million years ago also the remains of human beings. And these human beings were in many respects very different from men as we know them today. Their skulls had an entirely different cast from ours, being very low of forehead, very flat on top, and having big bumps over the eyebrows. Their arms and legs were not as proportionate as ours are today. In the course of further research many skeletons of those primeval human beings were found in different layers of the earth, and it was then seen that the present type of human beings, and their

racial differences, had developed in the course of a million years from a different type, and that this type, again, was descended from a still lower and more ancient type, until man could be traced back to the animal kingdom, to some very primitive ancestor, who, several millions of years ago, was the parent of the very first type of man and of some manlike monkeys similar to those in our zoological gardens. It would take a whole lot of interpreting to make the Mosaic story, even as an allegory, agree with these facts.

But why should one try to make them agree? Even the most devout believer in the Bible has thrown overboard the Mosaic belief that the earth is the center of the universe and that it stands still, while the sun revolves around it. Every public school now teaches the contrary, namely, that the sun is the center of the solar system, that the earth and all other planets of this system revolve around the sun, and that this whole system, including the sun, is moving in the direction of some far-off star in one of the great constellations in the heavens. Every intelligent believer in the Bible accepts this modern view without the least scruple. Is there any reason why the Mosaic theory of the creation of Adam and Eve should not be dropped for the

same reason, namely, because the facts of science have proven that the Bible story is a fable?

And these are not the only mistakes which revelation has made in trying to explain the world. But these illustrations suffice to show that the progress of mankind is greatly hampered by the ideas of so-called inspired prophets.

No one can tell when and where the first human revolution, the step from the animal-form to the man-form, took place. But we know now that it had to occur at a certain time, because the play of natural forces on one another had changed the layers of the earth, the climatic conditions of certain regions, and the plants then growing on the surface, to such an extent, that the nature of the primitive animals preceding man was radically transformed. Then it happened that among a number of children of primitive monkey-man one was born with a superior brain, with better hands and feet, and under the prevailing conditions this superior type was better fitted to stand the struggle for existence than all of the other children. And when further changes in the environment followed, this superior type was better able to adapt itself than the others, and so it multiplied and survived, while the others re-

mained behind in the march of progress or were entirely eliminated.

The descendants of that early manlike type continued to live in trees, like their ancestors, for many thousands of years. But their superior physical structure enabled them to live also on the ground. They learned to stand upright, to walk on their feet, and to the extent that they developed their legs, generation after generation, their arms grew shorter. Gradually they grew to be much like ourselves. As the structure of their extremities and skulls changed, so did their brains change, and so grew their capacity to assimilate ideas, to acquire memory, and to express what they felt. They learned to think like human beings and to speak human languages.

After many thousands of years of this sort of life they lost the dread of some elements of nature, such as water and fire. Instead of fearing them they began to use them. This produced another revolution in their habits of life. The use of fire enabled them to stay on the ground, and to live in caves, instead of in trees, for other animals were afraid of fire, and did not dare to go near it. Human beings then learned to cook, to fashion crude weapons, tools and dishes. Life became easier, their numbers multiplied, and with

the growth of their numbers they grew in power and intelligence, so that they spread over a large part of the surface of this globe.

When they had spread over the greater part of the surface of the earth various great catastrophies happened. Some other world-body, probably a second moon which formerly circled around the earth, struck our globe and changed the inclination of its axis. Within a short time the climatic and geographic conditions of the entire surface of the earth were radically transformed. Enormous masses of ice covered regions which had long enjoyed a warm climate. The plants and animals accustomed to this warm climate died or migrated. So did the majority of the men. But some of them survived in their caves. Other parts of the surface of the globe were flooded, entire continents lifted out of the water by volcanic eruptions, and thousands of miles of land turned over by fearful earthquakes.

After a while the globe once more assumed its peaceful aspect, so far as human beings were able to tell. But the forces of nature continued their work imperceptibly. Plains were slowly lifted up into mountain ranges. Mountains disintegrated and were flattened out into plains.

Miles of rock were gradually undermined by subterranean springs. Layers of minerals were shaken by smaller earthquakes, which disturbed the interior of the earth without changing its surface. But occasionally, when little changes of this kind have accumulated to a certain point, a sudden catastrophe occurs and reminds the human beings that the apparent peacefulness of the theater of their lives is a deception, and that right under their feet the cosmic forces are ever at work, just as they are overhead in the myriad stars.

Many fearful catastrophes have occurred in historical times, and many others will occur in the future. I will mention only a few of the most appalling. In 79 A. D., the cities of Herculaneum and Pompeii, at the foot of Mount Vesuvius, were buried under masses of volcanic ashes, and thousands of human beings perished. In 1755 an earthquake lasting five minutes destroyed the entire city of Lisbon and killed 60,000 people. In 1883 the outbreak of Krokatoa volcano, on a little island in the Sunda Straits, killed 40,000 people and buried miles of coastland and several little islands near the volcano. It caused a great tidal wave which circled the globe six times and carried destruction wherever it met

any obstacles. The masses of ashes ejected by this volcano floated in the atmosphere of the earth for years after and caused many disturbances in it. In 1901 the outbreak of Mount Pelee, on the island of Martinique, in the West Indies, killed about 50,000 people in less than one minute by hot gases.

These catastrophes, and the origin and development of man from animaldom, illustrate one kind of the world's revolutions, the revolution of the elements of nature. Whether they are gradual processes or sudden catastrophes, the life-habits of man, and thus his physical constitution and ideas, are always deeply influenced by them. And these revolutions take place in a sphere which is as yet entirely outside of the control of human society. Whether this sphere will ever be controlled by man, at least to a certain degree, is at present but a matter for conjecture.

But aside from these natural revolutions there are others which are due to human activity. There, too, are in a certain sense natural revolutions, because man belongs to nature, and his activity transforms certain parts of his environment as well as his own life and nature. Still, we may call his revolutions human ones, in order

to distinguish them from cosmic and terrestrial revolutions.

The revolutions of mankind vary according to the social organization. The very earliest type of men, with imperfect human bodies, and without fire and tools, had no other organization than the loose groups of their animal ancestors. But with a perfect human body, fire, crude tools, weapons, dishes, and a cave for a home, prehistoric man had not only acquired superior faculties for surviving in the struggle for existence against wild animals and the inclemencies of climate and season, but also surrounded himself with the conditions in which a social organization became a matter of course. Soon his numbers multiplied far beyond what they had been before the great world catastrophes.

The primitive organizations all clustered around blood-relationships. All those who traced their descent to the same mother belonged to the same group (gens) and lived together. Men and women lived as equals, dividing the work among themselves and sharing equally in its proceeds.

A new improvement came into the lives of human beings when they learned to domesticate animals and use their milk, meat, skins, bones and horns. The family groups then grew stil'

more rapidly, and their numbers thrived in body and mind. But at the same time the herds of cattle became the cause of one of the greatest human revolutions ever achieved peacefully.

It happened this way: The more the herds of domestic animals grew, the more it became necessary to move about in order to find fresh grazing lands for them. People had to leave their permanent places of abode, and so learned to make tents of animal skins and to wander about. This took them away from old habits and traditions. Then, too, the work of the men increased over that of the women, who staid in the temporary domiciles and did the domestic work. After a few generations of such a life the men gradually assumed a superior position in the groups, and one of them, the oldest, or wisest, or strongest, finally became the leader and manager among them. The women had to be content with an inferior position, and gradually the wealth of the group drifted into the hands of the strongest family and then of the man at the head of that family.

Hitherto the women had been held in high esteem. Descent had been traced by the female line. And the wealth of dead husbands had been inherited by their relatives on their mother's side,

not by their own children. But when one man became the owner of the wealth which had once belonged to the entire group he wanted his children to inherit from him directly. So the old custom of tracing descent from mothers was abandoned, and men became the rulers.

This revolution of men against the traditional equality of women was the cause of all subsequent human revolutions and the motive for it, as for all others, was the desire to be the exclusive owners of the resources of life which had been produced and used by all members of a certain group.

From that time on all human revolutions were but a repetition of the same cycle, which may be expressed in these words: First, there is an industrial revolution, due to the perfection of tools, which changes the methods of production. This creates changes in the economic and social relations of men and women. These changed economic and social relations produce a revolution of ideas. When this intellectual revolution has reached its maturity, a social revolution follows, ending in the downfall of a previously ruling group, or economic class, and the rise of another.

The revolution of the men against the women

was accompanied, or immediately followed, by fights with neighboring groups for the possession of more grazing lands and cattle. The vanquished men were made slaves, the women of the defeated groups were added to the wives of the victors.

Still another revolution took place before any of the nations known in our historical documents appeared upon the scene. This revolution was brought about by the discovery of metals, such as iron, copper, and tin, and of crude processes of melting and fashioning them. As soon as iron could be fashioned, iron hammers took the place of stone hammers, iron plowshares were used instead of wooden plows, gardening expanded into agriculture, and nomadic tribes became agricultural nations. Bronze and iron weapons gave to the nations possessing them an advantage in the struggles with the less advanced tribes, leading to the introduction of vast numbers of slaves into the victorious nations.

This is the "dawn of civilization," of which our school histories speak so eloquently. It is inaugurated by reducing women to a secondary position under the men, and by making freemen the slaves of nations with superior weapons. All the Aryan, Semitic, and Turanian nations known

to us by their written records, dating back as far as 10,000 years B. C., entered history either in the stage of transition from patriarchy to civilization, or from matriarchy (women's rule) to patriarchy (men's rule).

In all these nations we observe a gradual dissolution of the matriarchal or patriarchal groups, a periodical division of land among the families, followed by private ownership of land, by changes in the marriage customs, and by the institution of local organizations regardless of blood relationships. To the extent that distinctions of wealth increase, these changes take place. Simultaneously with them, organs of authority are introduced by the wealthy for the protection of their property against their poor fellow-beings. Hereditary chiefs, priests selected from the members of the prominent families and sworn to protect their interests, and armed warriors doing police duty against the members of the same local organizations, these are the immediate products of the new conditions. And finally, political rights are doled out according to the personal wealth owned by each man, and the modern state, with its class privileges and class assumptions, is established.

Once this class division in human society is

firmly enthroned the demon of private property rules mankind. Instead of liberating women from their inferior position, due to the patriarchal revolution, and men from other tribes out of their slavery to victorious nations, civilization adds members of the same nation to these female and male captives. Henceforth the struggle for existence against the forces of nature, instead of being lightened for the economically oppressed, is intensified for them. In vain have women struggled for more than 10,000 years for emancipation from the rule of men. In vain have the oppressed men struggled for liberation from the economic yoke imposed upon them by the men of the economically ruling classes. In vain have the primitive traditions of mother-love and brotherhood appealed to men's hearts. Class-struggles, sex-struggles, and the intensification of the general struggle for survival, for the oppressed of both sexes, are henceforth the life-long companions of mankind.

No matter what page of history, since the dawn of civilization, you may open, you will find women in economic dependence to men, and men groaning under the iron heels of material necessity and class rule. And you will find the members of the ruling classes fighting among

one another for the possession of the wealth and material resources of life, frequently compelling the oppressed classes to do the fighting for them.

But no ruling class remains long undisturbed. Soon the ground quakes under the rulers, and they are trodden under the feet of a new revolution.

Human revolutions do not proceed according to the preconceived wishes of men any more than other natural revolutions. They are directly due to man's individual and social activity, but they grow so slowly that the final catastrophe cannot be attributed to the conscious will of any definite individuals or masses. They are different from other natural revolutions only in one respect: The reason of man may, under certain circumstances, avert the catastrophe which would naturally come when the accumulation of many small changes in human society has reached a certain point. And the probability of a conscious prevention of a catastrophe will increase to the extent that men become aware of the laws of social development.

But up to quite recent times men knew nothing of the laws of natural or social development. Every ruling class dreamed that it would rule

forever, and insisted that men had always been so ruled, and would forever be so ruled. Instead of preparing for the inevitable, the rulers have simply tried to suppress the symptoms of the revolutions, which they were on the other hand preparing by the very economic activity that made them masters.

And so the development of man, up to the present time, has been one long trail of blood, and to this day the earth is marked by the bloody footprints of the toiling millions on their weary march toward a higher form of organization.

THE ROMAN PROLETARIAT

III. The Roman Empire and Its Proletariat

More than ten thousand years had gone by since the first records of the Semitic race had been written on Babylonian stone. Babylon had long ceased to be a power. Its stately structures were crumbling on the banks of the Euphrates, and but for a few scattered settlements its location was almost deserted. The Assyrians, who had been enthroned in this city and in Western Asia after the Babylonians, had likewise passed away as a historical force. Their records, which claim to cover a period of almost 50,000 years, had become mere myths.

The Persians had conquered the Assyrian lands, held sway in Asia Minor, and had finally succumbed to Alexander the Great of Macedonia. After his death his empire had been divided among his generals, but even their kingdoms had vanished. In Africa the Egyptian dynasties, dating back fully 6,000 years, had sunk beneath the desert sands. Only the Sphinx and the pyra-

mids remained on the banks of the Nile as mute witnesses of the rise and fall of the Egyptian empires.

Rome now ruled most of the known nations of the world. From the Pillars of Hercules (The Rock of Gibraltar) to the Euphrates, and from the Danube to the African desert, nearly every tribe and nation bowed under the scepter of Emperor Augustus.

In the North, the German tribes were still unsubdued. Scandinavia and Russia were unexplored territory. Britain had been invaded, but not yet conquered. A few African and Asiatic chiefs and kings still remained rebellious. But Rome was the only world power in Asia, Europe and Africa, so far as these continents were known.

Far away in the East, the Chinese empire, just then ruled by the Han dynasty, also looked back upon 50,000 years of recorded history. But in the West no one suspected even its presence. And far across the Atlantic Ocean there stretched away between the two polar circles, covering nearly every degree of latitude between them, the American continent, largely a product of primordial world-catastrophes, and peopled by the survivors of the primitive dwellers. But not

even the Semetic, Aryan, or Turanian gods, much less their alleged human interpreters, who claimed to have received "divine revelations" about supernatural things beyond the clouds, had an inkling of these material facts next door to their own material world.

Whenever those ancient empires had fallen, their gods and their priests had gone down together with their rulers. But the great mass of their people, the working classes, had adapted themselves to the new order of things and survived gods, rulers, and priests.

Under the rule of Augustus Rome had reached what the school historians are pleased to call its "golden age." That which entitles this period to such a distinction, in their eyes, is the vast accumulation of wealth from all parts of the known world, the splendor of the public life, the accomplishments of the poets and artists, and similar glittering by-work, which the official chroniclers know so well how to display. But if the sycophants had cared to lift but a corner of the sumptuous gaudiness and poetical tinsel, they would have seen the cancer of degeneration eating away the heart of the Roman people.

The "golden age" of Rome came in with an overthrow of the Roman republic, a suppression

of the ancient rights of the Roman people, and the usurpation of the imperial power by the Cæsars. The wealth of foreign peoples had been captured at the expense of the life-blood of the sturdy Roman peasants. The coffers of the generals and patricians were filled with gold and gems, while the bones of the fighting working people were rotting in unknown graves in foreign countries. The credit for the heroic accomplishments of these fighters was given to the giddy and licentious pillars of Roman "society," who were revelling in their plunder and paying their unprincipled historians to write glowing accounts of deeds which they had never performed.

No one thought of praising the heroism and manhood of the lowly warriors, who had been the bulwark of Rome throughout all the 750 years since the mythical foundation of the city. Only here and there we find them mentioned, but generally in terms of contempt and hatred, whenever they revolted against the infringement of their rights by the rising nobility. To read the official accounts of those revolts, one would think that the Roman working classes were a set of criminals. The actual truth was that the criminals were those who fulminated in their speeches and writings against the working

classes, and who paid men worse than criminals to write history from the point of view of the criminal upstarts.

When the city of Rome had been built the Roman people had still lived in groups of blood relations, although the men had already assumed the mastery over the women. But there was still enough life in those ancient organizations to give to the male members equal political rights. Gradually, property had come in between the equal brothers, and the poorer gentiles had been compelled to defend themselves continually against the encroachments and grasping aims of the rising patricians, who were slowly but surely getting the wealth of the gentes into their control.

Time and again the Roman working people had enforced reforms by means of their political power. The last great reforms had been attempted by the Gracchi, from 133 to 121 B. C., and by Cataline in 63 B. C. These leaders had tried to enforce a redistribution of the lands stolen from the farmers by the aristocracy. But at this period the majority of the working classes had already been reduced to a proletarian condition and many were so debilitated in character that they frequently opposed the very reforms which

were undertaken in their interest. They even betrayed some of the leaders who were trying to roll the wheels of social development backward in defense of the lowly. The Gracchi, as well as Cataline, were killed by the aristocratic criminals. The Roman populist movement ended in defeat, just as the American populist movement did almost two thousand years later. The difference was only that the Roman populist leaders were forsaken by the rank and file, while the rank and file of the American populist movement were betrayed by their leaders. The Roman populist leaders died in heroic defense of their principles, while the American populist leaders sold their principles for the mess of pottage of political spoils. Both movements were foredoomed to failure and could not have won, even if they had not been betrayed. They were working against the course of social development. They reaped but the fruits of the primitive "sins" of humanity, which had been committed by the patriarchal revolution of men against women and captured foes. It was blindness and inexperience to think that men could get away from the effects of those primitive "sins" by merely dividing up the spoils for which those "sins" had been committed. Instead of trying

o redistribute landed property those movements would have had to abolish private property in the means of production, and this could not have been done without the help of those classes which suffered most from the effects of the introduction of private property. But this understanding was not to come from the class to which the Roman and American populists mainly belonged.

It was an easy matter for the men in the little primitive groups to assume control of the social wealth and power. But when this step had once been taken society had placed itself under the ban of unknown laws. And these laws decreed that thousands of years of painful struggles should pass away before a class should arise that should have the understanding and the power to lift the curse and free mankind out of its grasp. This class is the proletariat of the modern capitalist nations, the men and women of all occupations whose only means of existence is the labor-power of their bodies, who own neither land nor other means of production, and who can exist only on charity or by the employment of their labor-power for the benefit of some master.

At the time of Augustus there existed in the Roman empire a proletariat numbering millions.

But it was in many respects different from the modern proletariat. It was made up partly of those Roman citizens who had been ruined by military service, partly of captives from all parts of the conquered world held as slaves, partly of those working people of foreign nations who were always on the verge of starvation and servitude from lack of instruments of production, but had not been made slaves, because it was less trouble for the rulers to let them eke out their own living as best they might.

The proletarian Roman citizens considered themselves superior to the other proletarians, because they had still some insignificant political rights, while the captive slaves and the beggared freemen of other nations had no voice whatever in the affairs of the Roman empire. Owing to the increasing number of slaves in the Roman peninsula manual labor had become a badge of shame in the eyes of the Roman citizens. The proletarian Roman citizens, therefore, found it more honorable to live by selling their votes to the politicians, or by accepting the charity of the patricians and doing their dirty work in politics. This class of proletarians is always on the side of the wealthy, and betrays the revolutionary proletariat whenever an opportunity offers, at

least so long as the coffers of the wealthy are open for them.

The beggared freemen of other nations had no sympathy with the Roman authorities, who oppressed and blackmailed them worse than the invading hordes of unsubdued tribes on the frontiers. They hated the Roman soldiers and officials, and were only too glad to injure and harass them whenever they could do so without risking their own skin. But this class was not very dangerous to Roman rule, as they had no cohesion and no definite aims.

The most dangerous class in the confines of the Roman empire, from the point of view of the patricians and property-owners, were the slaves. They were not men and women of inferior races, such as the negro slaves in the United States. Most of them were in every respect the equals of the Roman people. Many slaves were as highly cultured as the best Roman patrician, and great numbers of them were warriors, who required constant watching in order to prevent any violent outbreaks. The contempt with which they were treated by the Roman people did not improve the temper of these slaves. Escapes, fights with overseers, and suicides were

every-day occurrences among them. It required an armed nation to keep this element in check.

But this internal danger was not the only one which threatened the Roman empire. There were above all the growing fights among the patricians themselves. And militant tribes living on the borderlands of the Roman provinces made constant invasions and compelled the Roman legions to be ever on guard. The newly subdued chiefs, likewise, were not willing to submit tamely, and either they, their families, their successors, or rival chiefs, made life very unpleasant for the Roman rulers.

Most of the slaves would have been glad to get back to their own people. But some of the more farseeing men and women understood that Rome was irrevocably the world-power of that period, and that the only way to obtain liberty was to overthrow this world-power. But this was a tremendous undertaking. The only element in the Roman world interested in such a task from immediate necessity were the captive proletarians.

The subdued chiefs of other nations, who were permitted to play a secondary role under the Roman authorities, would have been only too glad to overthrow the Roman rule, but only for the

purpose of taking the places of the Roman rulers and mulcting the people for their own benefit. These chiefs might interest a large number of their own followers in such a "patriotic" revolt against Rome, but they had not the least interest in establishing the proletariat as a world-power. Indeed, when the proletarian plans were once understood by them they invariably sided with the Roman rulers against the proletariat.

This attitude of the foreign chiefs had the effect of opening the eyes of many of their own beggared people. More and more the far-seeing among the lowly of all nations realized that they were as much interested as the captive proletarians in overthrowing Roman rule and with it the rule of their own traitor chiefs.

But the difficulties that stood in the way of an international understanding among the proletarians of all nations were insurmountable. All the great roads were watched by military posts. Reading and writing were so little known that the only reliable method of intercourse among the revolutionaries was to pass the word from mouth to mouth. But international communication by this method was very tedious, because it required the selection of secret channels, and an international medium of speech developed only

gradually by the extension of the Latin language. The spreading of the idea of a proletarian world depended, therefore, to a large extent on the spread of the Latin language and on familiarity with Roman conditions and methods. But the Roman empire extended its power and went through the process of its rise and dissolution much faster than the idea of an international proletarian revolution could spread. And the continual invasions of barbarian tribes, as well as the dynastic fights among the Roman and foreign patricians, greatly interfered with the up-building of a united proletarian movement.

The task before the militant proletariat appeared so tedious, and the difficulties besetting it were so discouraging, that the impatient and fiery nature of the leading spirits among them several times precipitated a violent revolution, in the hope of catching the Roman power unawares and overthrowing it by steps at a time, without the united efforts of the majority of the proletarians in the Roman world.

In 149 B. C. the Roman slaves in Spain, under the leadership of Viriathus, had made a determined attempt to throw off the yoke of oppression and had beaten the Roman legions in several engagements. But it was easy enough for the

Roman power to isolate the rebellion and suppress it. Instead of the coveted liberty thousands of slaves found only relief in death on the battle field, and other thousands were crucified. The same fate befell the slaves who revolted under Eunus in Sicily in 140 B. C. It is reported that 20,000 of them were crucified by the Roman authorities. In spite of these massacres, Spartacus succeeded in 74 B. C. in gathering a large army of fugitive slaves in the South of Italy. He held the Roman legions at bay for four years, beating them in ten open battles, until finally his forces were overwhelmed in northern Italy. This heroic struggle ended likewise in wholesale executions. The result of these slave revolts was that traces of organization between the slaves were ruthlessly hunted down and crushed as soon as discovered. Even the organizations of free workers were declared illegal, unless officered by Roman authorities.

After the defeat of Spartacus the futility of this method of combating Roman rule was more and more recognized by the slaves. All surviving slave organizations took refuge in the utmost secrecy, adopting secret pass-words, signals, and signs, and punishing treason by immediate death. The main purpose of these organizations became

more and more the mere propaganda of the idea of an international proletarian supremacy. This idea had animated the leaders of the crushed slave-revolts, and their blood made it a sacred legacy to all who had escaped the fury of the Roman authorities.

But, of course, the case looked now more hopeless than ever. No political rights, no permission to bear arms, no possibility of meeting in public, and no other organization but scattered and secret groups without any affiliation — these were the conditions under which the Roman proletariat was compelled to work for its ideal of a free world.

It was evident that this ideal world would not be realized in short order; that it would require long and patient perseverance to spread the underground lines for an international understanding; and that it might even require a lifetime, if not more, to get ready for the final outbreak. Many slaves, whose inclinations for mysticism and fatalist resignation exceeded their assertive and revolutionary qualities, naturally expressed doubts whether it would ever be possible to accomplish this task without the help of some god.

But which one of all the gods known to the

proletarians of the Roman empire was it that would be likely to take the side of the lowly? There were a good many divinities, indeed, for every nation under the rule of the Romans had different gods. And the Roman rulers, on their part, had been quick to realize the influence of the priests and priestesses of those various gods and goddesses, and had erected altars to every celestial that seemed respectable to them, in the hope of thus creating a uniform world religion, which would make their rule still securer.

Surely none of these official divinities took any interest in the proletarian aims. The old gods and goddesses, like the traitorous chiefs and priests of the various nations, had always been on the side of the Roman authorities. If help was to come from any god, it must be one that the mass of the proletarians had not yet become acquainted with, one to whom they could all turn, regardless of nationalities, and who would take sides with them against the Roman power and against the gods that had forsaken them in their dire need.

There were many slaves, of course, who had lost faith in any and all gods. But these sceptical ones had at least one very good reason for not opposing the religious longings of their fellow-

sufferers, and this was the secret hope of eluding the vigilance of the Roman masters, if they pretended to meet for religious worship, in order to discuss their revolutionary work. It would then be a battle of one all-powerful proletarian god against the other gods, and if the issue was put in this way there was every reason to believe that even Roman soldiers would learn to side with them and worship their new god. For this was the point where even Rome was vulnerable.

By erecting altars to so many other gods for political reasons, the Roman authorities had discredited their own gods in the eyes of many Roman soldiers, and to the extent that the new order of things in the empire widened the gulf between patricians and ordinary Roman citizens and wiped out the last survival of the ancient gentile bonds with which the Roman gods had been identified, the Roman legions became untrustworthy as defenders of plutocratic prerogative. On the other hand, an international empire could not be built up without bringing the foreign working classes into closer touch with the Roman soldiers. If a new religion should unite them all, whether it was introduced from above or from below, it would at the same time remove one of the gravest causes of animosity between

the Roman soldiers and the proletarians of the occupied provinces.

According to the old tribal legends, gods came down to the earth occasionally and took an active part in human affairs. And if a proletarian god should some day come among them, the swords of many Roman soldiers might be turned against the Roman authorities. Then the proletariat would have friends in the enemy's own camp.

Similar ideas were more or less clearly expressed by the proletarians of the Augustinian period. And while thousands of the most energetic and clear-headed of them disseminated the germs of the social revolution, at the risk of immediate death, millions of them, discouraged and sore at heart, were longing for the advent of a divine liberator, who should break their chains and triumph over all rulers. So the embers of the revolution were glowing secretly under the surface, waiting for the breath that should fan them into living flames.

IV. The Christian Proletariat and Its Mission

Among the provinces conquered by the Romans shortly before the accession of Augustus was Palestine, or Judæa, as they called it. It was the land of the Jews, a nation at least one thousand years older than the Roman. But while the Romans had gone through their development from gentile patriarchy to a class-state in about 750 years, the Jews had barely completed this transition at the time of the Roman conquest. Tribal traditions were, therefore, much more persistent among the Jews than among the Romans.

When Rome had been founded, the Romans had been surrounded only by inferior nations, whom they easily vanquished and assimilated. But the Jews had from the very beginning been walled in by strong nations, had been obliged to develop between these walls, and had been pulled hither and thither in the wars between those nations.

Like all primitive tribal nations, the Jews

traced the descent of their twelve tribes to one common ancestor. The fact that this ancestor was a man, Abraham, proves that the roots of the Jewish tribes reached down to a time when the ancestors of Abraham had already accomplished the transition from mother equality to father-rule.

About 1,900 years before the time of Augustus Abraham had emigrated from Chaldæa, so the Jewish legend said. And this legend was still so fresh at the time of the Roman conquest that every Jew was acquainted with his tribal family-tree and enjoyed much of the old tribal democracy. If the geographical location and historical environment of Palestine had made of the Jews the playball of other nations, it had also prevented the development of such vast distinctions of wealth, and, therefore, of such oppressive government machinery as had arisen among the Roman people. The mass of the Jews still felt themselves as brothers and equals, for their economic condition was more nearly alike than that of the Romans, and they had never assimilated any other nationality in their gentes.

The ancestral traditions of the Jews were inseparably connected with the worship of one god.

It was this that distinguished them from all the nations of antiquity. The ancient legend said that Abraham had left Chaldæa in order to escape idolatry. Like the Puritans 3,500 years after him, he moved to a lower stage of social development in order to get away from the oppressive rules of worship which always grow up with an exclusive priesthood and class-government. And the Jews had clung to this traditional god with the obstinacy characteristic of tribal people.

They had worshiped him during their captivity in Egypt, about 1,400 years before the Roman invasion. They had defended him and their tribal customs against the license and assumption of the tribal war-chiefs who tried to assume royal power after the twelve tribes had settled down permanently to an agricultural life. And after David had succeeded in making his line the hereditary rulers, by the help of hereditary priests, the people rallied again and again to the support of those who wanted to save the ancient form of organization and the democratic worship of their god. Those ancient reformers, or prophets, in the name of their tribal god, swung the rod over priests and kings, and their influence went far in keeping the ancient customs and

traditions alive. Invasions of other nations likewise checked the development of the class-state among Jews.

When, after many hard struggles against the Syrians and Assyrians, the Jews succumbed in 586 B. C. to Nebuchadnezzar and were carried away to Babylon as slaves, their tribal organization and worship held them together once more, until they were sent back home after the defeat of the Assyrians by the Persians and rebuilt their temple about 520 B. C. The last of the Jews returned out of their Babylonian captivity about 453 B. C.

But no sooner had they become fairly settled than the old internal troubles began once more. Try as they would an aristocratic class of wealthy and priests would persist in arising and encroaching on their tribal brotherhod. In 140 B. C. the aristocracy and priesthood had united in making Simon Maccabæus the hereditary prince and high priest, and thus cemented their alliance against the ordinary tribal members. In this way the tribal god became an aristocratic god, the same as the gods of other nations, among whom the distinctions between rich and poor had led to class-struggles.

But the Jewish people did not easily relinquish

their ancient traditions, in spite of the growing class-distinctions, and at the time of the Roman conquest there was still more freedom of assembly and speech among them than in Rome. As the Roman invaders seldom interfered in the internal affairs of the people conquered by them, but rather made the local authorities responsible for the prompt payment of taxes and execution of orders, the Jews retained this limited freedom up to the time of the destruction of Jerusalem and the entire suppression of the nation.

Nor did the Jews take kindly to the idea of an aristocratic transformation of their tribal god. And when the dynastic fights of the Maccabæans were capped by the Roman invasion, the Jewish people regarded these events as a just punishment for the violation of their ancient tribal traditions.

That this historical development followed definite laws and could not be undone never entered their minds, for they were limited in their understanding by their past history and environment. It was quite natural for people of their past to look backward rather than forward, and to expect the coming of another prophet, who should square accounts with the aristocratic rulers and priests and at the same time overthrow

the Roman supremacy. They turned to the records of their ancient prophets and found that the coming of another prophet had been foretold. And the more the yoke of the Roman rule and the overbearing attitude of their own wealthy countrymen galled them, the more did the idea of an early advent of their new prophet take possession of them.

So the way was paved for a national revolution of the Jews. But in order to succeed, this national revolution would have to extend beyond the boundaries of Palestine. It would have to overthrow the Roman empire. No doubt many Jews realized this. But this did not appear so very difficult to them. Had not their god marched ahead of them in a column of fire when they had left Egypt? Had he not saved them time and again when all seemed lost? And had they not been faithful to him? It would be easy for him to destroy Rome if he so chose. So the idea of an alliance with the international proletariat did not suggest itself to them. The revolution was to be purely a Jewish affair.

Little did they suspect that millions of proletarians in the Roman empire were anxiously waiting for just such a god. Among those proletarians were many Jews who had been carried

off to Rome as prisoners, and who served with their fellow-sufferers of all nations on the princely estates or in the homes of the patricians, or amused the Roman people as gladiators. Most of the Jews in Palestine, with their limited horizon, were far from grasping the fact that their national revolution would have the effect of a backward step in social development, and that, in order to escape the evils which oppressed them, they would have to support the aims of the international proletariat.

But even though they did not reason this out, the coming of the expected prophet could not help working right into the hands of the revolutionary proletarians. The very words of the ancient prophets in his mouth would serve the purposes of the world-revolution. And if the Jews should not understand the meaning of these words there would be millions outside of Palestine ready to receive the message of the new Jewish prophet with open hearts.

It was into this atmosphere full of revolutionary forebodings that Jesus, the son of Joseph of Nazareth, a direct descendant of David, was born. The boy grew up in the traditions of his people. He was wide-awake and took a special interest in the study of the history of his people.

Through his family connections he came into close touch with men and women who knew the secrets of the priesthood. He heard and saw many things which opened his eyes about the methods by which the priests hoodwinked the people. He learned many of the tricks which the ignorant regarded as the expression of some occult power. And his deeply religious and generous mind became convinced that a true god must be greater than the god of the Jews.

When he grew older he became acquainted with the secret revolutionary organizations in Palestine. The ideas of the international revolution had been gradually disseminated from friend to friend by Jews who had been in touch with the proletariat in Italy. Jesus, the son of a carpenter, and himself working at this trade, fell readily in with those ideas. His whole heart was with his class, and his fiery soul was soon aglow with enthusiasm and zeal to establish an international brotherhood of the working class which should create the conditions for peace on earth and good will to all men regardless of classes and nationalities.

To a man of his intellect it was evident that the proposed Jewish revolution would simply be a backward step and that it could not accomplish

anything, even for the Jewish people, so long as the main evil, the private ownership of the resources of life, remained. Among the Jews the remembrance of the oft-repeated redistribution of the land among the tribal families was still alive, so that the idea of a community of land and wealth became a natural demand of the Jewish revolutionaries. And most of the other nations were still more or less familiar with this mode of equalizing things. The international proletariat had, therefore, no difficulty in making this demand their own.

It has often been said that the communism of those ancient revolutionaries concerned itself only with the consumption of things, not with their production. But all circumstances indicate that their plans included the public ownership of land and the sharing of the products of agriculture and handicrafts. On the other hand, co-operation in production on a large scale was out of the question in most industries. Although practicable in certain departments of agriculture, it is not applicable to all agriculture, even in modern times with modern machinery. It was practicable in the Roman empire only with slave labor. But with independent farmers the demand of the ancient revolutionaries could be only

individual production and common consumption. Even the modern Socialist understands that the small farmer with his individual production will have to be left alone until he takes naturally to the co-operative farm where it is practicable.

So long as the public ownership of the land was impossible, for the reason that the ruling class had control, it became the practice of the ancient communists to sell their land, if they had any, and turn the proceeds into the common treasury. With the identity of the economic condition of all proletarians the primitive tribal communism asserted itself quite spontaneously. They simply tried to practice what they taught even under the rule of aristocratic classes, but their final aims included the control of production as well as of consumption. There is not the least reason to doubt this, for the ideas of an international proletariat and the abolition of class-rule necessarily include the public ownership of the means of production.

The question of the method of propaganda must have been very carefully considered by Jesus and his comrades. No doubt the secret methods were followed for many years, for Jesus was thirty years old before he took up the propaganda in public. But finally it became evi-

dent that the revolutionaries would have to make public propaganda if they wished to reach the mass of their countrymen and women. It was equally plain that they would have to fulfill the expectations of the Jews as to the coming of the new prophet, in order to use their enthusiasm and bravery for the proletarian revolution, and get them away from the reactionary idea of a purely Jewish revolt. And last, but not least, it was inevitable that they should employ the mystic tricks of the ancient prophets and the religious mode of expression in order to fulfill the word of those prophets and to hoodwink the Roman authorities. That was the only way to prevent their organization and real aims from being prematurely discovered by those in power.

It did not require any deception on the part of Jesus to play this part. His own religious convictions compelled him to teach the idea of a world-god and a world-religion, and the international proletariat was the only class in the Roman empire to realize the economic and political aims by which such a world-religion could become a fact. Perhaps he even regarded the establishment of such a religion and a martyr's death as higher ideals than the overthrow of the ruling classes and the brotherhood of man.

But his own words, if their substance has been correctly reported, show that he was aware of his proletarian mission and loyal to it. Of course, the first editors of the scripture-account took care to modify his radical words and offset them by statements which meant the exact opposite. How much of the true history of the origin of the Christian revolution in Palestine has been suppressed will be difficult to ascertain. As for the so-called miracles, which Jesus is said to have performed, they were a legitimate part of the outfit of every prophet, and his familiarity with the secrets of occultism, as well as his family connections, made him a very desirable agitator under the prevailing conditions.

The preparations for carrying out the proletarian plans in Palestine were made so secretly that neither the Jewish nor the Roman authorities discovered the organizations interested in this work. But it is very evident that a thorough organization existed in all twelve tribes, and that the public appearance of Jesus and his comrades was well prepared by suggestive hints as to the coming of the long-expected prophet, before the agitation began. The sending out of John the Baptist may have been a part of the general plan,

provided his role has not been invented by the editors of scripture.

Jesus was the chosen head of the propaganda committee, which consisted of twelve organizers, besides him, one for each Jewish tribe. The remainder of the organization remained under cover, but the chairmen of the locals were known to the initiated, who had to identify themselves by a secret password and sign. The organizers made their circuits on foot or on horseback and were furnished with board and lodging by the local comrades. Of course these precautions were no proof against the sneaking traitor who might come in under the mask of comradeship, but Jesus calmed the fears of his comrades by telling them that they could easily recognize "false prophets" by their fruits, and that such men would betray themselves without injuring the organization materially. In short, the organization carried on its work much in the same way as the German Socialists during the period of the anti-Socialist laws, only that the Jewish agitators had the advantage of speaking a language which the Roman authorities did not understand.

In the scriptural account the twelve tribal organizers appear as the disciples of Jesus, who is supposed to have picked them up by chance and

selected them for this work on his own intuitional recognition of their worth. But it is sufficient to point out that Jesus, with his family connections and knowledge of religious secrets, could have found many men of the gens of Aaron to assist him, if it had simply been a question of a new religion. Instead, his so-called disciples were men of the working class, without any religious training, evidently one for each tribe.

It is impossible to refer to the scriptural accounts in any other but the most general way. For we must remember that these accounts were written by members of the ruling class three hundred years after the death of Jesus and his contemporaries, and that they had been handed down during those centuries from mouth to mouth. The historian must, therefore, beware of imitating the flights of imagination and rhetoric which the official interpreters of the scriptures pass off on their audiences as impartial presentations of the origin of the Christian movement.

We are dealing with historical facts. Here is the Roman empire, with its constitution and methods. There is the proletariat and its avowed aims. Such is the mode of production, such the resulting control of humanity over nature, and such their knowledge of the world and of them-

selves. Here enter the Jewish people, with well-known historical elements. And this must inevitably result. Every one can test these results. No belief or faith in any other man, such as the official interpreters of the scriptures demand, is required for this test.

The proletarian agitation in Palestine began its public career in out-of-the-way places, far from the jealous eyes of the authorities. Under the prevailing mode of production the rural districts were the main seats of the revolution. It was only as the word was passed along that the news of this agitation spread to the cities. And this was the burden of the proletarian teachings: The working people are the salt of the earth. If this salt degenerate, whence shall humanity derive its strength? The working people are the light of the world. They should let their light shine before the people, so that the proletarian ideals and aims may become known. The victory of the working class is inevitable. The lowly shall inherit the earth, and "not one jot or one tittle shall pass from the law till all is fulfilled." Therefore, premature violent revolutions, such as some contemplate, are useless. Violent resistance is evil, until the majority get ready for it. It is not men who are responsible, but conditions.

Therefore the workers must not hate the rulers, for they are acting as their environment dictates, and they do not understand that the working class must do the same. The proletariat does not wish to destroy religion, but to give it real life. The religion of the scribes and pharisees is a sham, because it cannot be practiced in human relations. Men should live under conditions in which they can practice the golden rule. One cannot serve two masters. A rich man will as soon be truly religious as a camel will go through the eye of a needle. One who accumulates wealth by exploiting others cannot treat them at the same time as brothers. It is ridiculous to spend all our lives producing the material requirements of life and to have no leisure for the improvement of the intellect when, under a rational system, men would have to pay no more attention to the problem of existence than the birds of the air or the lilies of the field. Men cannot come into communion with God so long as they are compelled to live contrary to his natural laws. God cannot be a god of hate, but must be a god of love, and only by following the natural laws of his world can men fit themselves for that higher life which will make them one with God. Therefore the working class must

first rise out of its servitude and claim the world for its own. This requires great sacrifices and much strength, but only by walking on this narrow path of the proletarian revolution can men go to heaven. For the present give to Cæsar what is Cæsar's, but do not relax in your agitation. Spread the idea of the proletarian revolution wherever you go. In due time these ideals will surely prevail, and then peace and freedom will settle on earth.

This message struck home like a thunderbolt. The people flocked to hear Jesus and his comrades. They were received with open arms by the lowly wherever they spoke. Within three years after the opening of the first public agitation, Palestine was honeycombed with revolutionary organizations.

The Jewish priests and upstarts were aghast. They sought to discredit and stop the agitation by every conceivable means. They set trap after trap for Jesus, who laughed at their sly tricks and defeated them in debate whenever they engaged in a discussion with him. They charged him with breaking the Sabbath, and he told them it was always right to work for the purpose of maintaining life. They charged him with sexual license, and he told them that they had no right

to make such charges, so long as they coveted the wives and daughters of their neighbors and divorced their own wives on flimsy pretexts. They accused him of blasphemy, and he held up to scorn their hypocritical modes of worship. When all other means failed, they denounced him to the Roman authorities as a rebel.

It would have been easy enough for Jesus to refute this charge, for which the prosecution had very little evidence. And if he had stayed among his rural friends, instead of venturing into the city of Jerusalem, where his enemies were strong and his own supporters weak, he might have escaped the persecution of the Jewish priests much longer. For the Romans had not yet awakened to the seriousness of the proletarian agitation, although it had already won its way into the ranks of the Roman legionaries.

But Jesus became a victim of his own fatalistic belief in the inevitable course of things. The opportunity for effective propaganda during the Easter festivities in Jerusalem seemed so inviting that he could not resist the temptation, and took a greater risk than was necessary. He practically delivered himself with open eyes into the hands of his enemies. The persistent charge that he was attacking the Jewish religion sealed

his doom in the eyes of those who had no clear understanding of his proletarian aims, or no sympathy for them. In spite of the unwillingness of the Roman authorities, the partisans of the Jewish priests succeeded in having him crucified, before his horror-stricken comrades realized the seriousness of the situation.

However, there is much evidence for the probability that he was not dead when he was taken from the cross, and that his comrades removed his body from the tomb, into which it had been temporarily placed, and nursed him back to life in one of their secret haunts. At least some of his friends claimed to have seen him alive three days after his crucifixion.

The belief that he had risen from the dead increased the influence of his message, and the movement gained rather than lost by his alleged death. The story of his heroic faithfulness to his principles touched every proletarian heart, which was already burning with the memories of Viriathus, Eunus and Spartacus. Fired by his example, the followers of Jesus displayed a disregard of their own lives and safety which spurred every true man among them to the greatest exertions. Persecutions seemed to add only more fuel to this movement. About thirty years

after the death of Jesus it had spread to every province in the Roman empire and eaten its way into the very heart of Roman society. It annoyed Nero so much that he burned the city of Rome in the hope of inciting the Roman rabble against the Christians. He killed them by the thousands in the arena, and burned them as candles to light his revels. And his successors frequently persecuted the Christians, in order to divert the attention of the Roman plebs from the rottenness of the empire.

But this rottenness was the very soil from which the proletariat derived its existence and the justification for its revolution. During the four hundred years following the death of Jesus the Roman empire went through a continuous process of civil wars, invasions and economic and political disintegration. There was no cohesion, no definite aims, no enthusiasm anywhere, but among the Christian proletariat.

Of course, the centuries of evolution made their impression also on the proletariat. If, in their aims and agitation, they could have laid more stress on the economic and political features and less on the religious ones, the class-character of their movement and its democratic and communistic spirit might have lived unscathed

through it all. But the predominance of the religious note in their message, which appealed to all classes and left much room for unclearness, weakened the proletarian organization from the moment that members of other classes, attracted by the lofty spirit of the proletarian ideas, joined in large numbers. This led to a gradual transformation of the former working class organization into a religious sect, with representatives of all classes, and to the development of an exclusive priesthood in place of the proletarian agitators. To the extent that this transformation took place and the progress of time dimmed the memories of the original character of the movement, class-distinctions carried coldness and disruption also into the ranks of the Christians. The communistic practices jarred on the sensitive nerves of the wealthy members, and the primitive democracy was gradually confined to the intercourse of the true proletarians among themselves. And only these remained a danger to the existing order of things. But their organization was weakened and there was no more confidence in their leaders.

In the beginning of the fourth century the Roman empire was on the verge of utter collapse. Slave-labor had become so unprofitable

that the slave-owners were glad to get rid of their slaves. On the other hand, the labor of free men had not yet become respectable and the elements for a new mode of production did not exist anywhere. Politically, the empire had been disrupted by dynastic feuds and by the continued invasions of Franks, Allemanni, Goths and other barbarian tribes. A concerted action of the international proletariat at this period would have been fatal to the Roman supremacy. Without the support of the leading Christians the empire could not endure.

Emperor Constantine realized this in the year 312, six years after his accession to the throne. With great skill he availed himself of the schisms between the Christians to win the wealthy and influential priests to his side, and thus to get control of the entire organization. He suddenly saw a great light shaped like a cross. Such visions had played a prominent part in the history of the Jews and of the early Christians. It was nothing strange that Constantine should suddenly proclaim himself a servant of the Lord whom he had so long persecuted. Had not Saul become a Paul in the same way?

But the new Saul became a Judas. And the

Christian Judases who assisted him were rewarded for their treachery, instead of being punished. The entire purpose and meaning of the Christian organization and message were perverted. From a revolutionary movement it was turned into a pillar of wealth and exploitation. The revolutionary proletariat saw itself robbed of the results of hundreds of years of persevering efforts. Its organization, instead of triumphing, fell to pieces at the very moment when its enemy was weakest and it might have changed the history of the world.

If ever a man had good reasons for turning in his grave it was Jesus. The very class who had crucified him now posed as his friends and nailed his proletarian brothers to the cross of lifelong exploitation. His cross on Golgotha which had for centuries been the symbol of his revolutionary aims, for which he had given his life, now became the symbol of submission and nerveless resignation to the "station which it had pleased God to assign" to the proletarians. The early Christian agitators had been compelled, by the historical conditions of the Roman empire, to counsel the wise tactics of non-resistance to the powers that were, relying for the success of their propaganda on intellectual growth

alone. The reactionary Christianity of the ruling classes seized upon this wise tactical rule and converted it into a slavish and cowardly principle of "non-resistance to evil." This principle was from the outset meant to be a mental pressure on the working classes for the purpose of preventing their resistance against the evil of ruling-class oppression. But the rulers were never very deeply impressed with the dignity of this non-resistant policy in their dealings with the working classes, and violated it shamefully on the slightest pretext.

The Christian proletariat had revived all those elements of primitive Gentilism which make for a higher human development away from the brute. Without those primitive "virtues" the proletariat could not realize its ideals, could not terminate the war of man against man. The ruling-class Christianity instead of eliminating the cause that set man to war against his kind and against his own soul, strengthened the economic inequality and sanctioned the primitive sins of patriarchy.

Jesus had transformed the Jewish god of hate into a god of love and a prince of peace. The church of the possessing Christians molded him into a hideous monstrosity, a god of love who is

a god of hate, and a prince of peace who brings a sword. And they lived up to this monstrosity of their own creation, and flew at one another's throats immediately after they had betrayed their proletarian comrades and destroyed the life's work of Jesus.

But the modern proletarian remembers the cross on Golgotha.

~~Where is your scientific Knowledge?~~

~~This is absurd rot.~~

The truth hurts.

FEUDAL ECCLESIASTICISM

V. Feudal Ecclesiasticism and Its Disintegration

The betrayal of the Christian movement by the wealthy Christians did not save the Roman state. It had disrupted the proletarian organization, but it could not do away with the proletariat. Much less did it abolish the conditions which created a proletariat. So the Roman empire fell to pieces.

The trade between church and state had been surrounded with a saintly halo. The Roman people had been told that it would elevate their souls and improve their bodies. In reality it loaded them with greater burdens than ever. It steeped their souls in ignorance and stunted their bodies. It intensified all the evils from which the Roman empire was suffering.

When the Roman state died the Roman church became its heir. Naturally it inherited all the diseases of the rotten empire. The blight of slave labor was not removed by the church, but sanctioned, as it had already been when the prole-

tarian revolution had been betrayed. The discredit thrown on free labor was applauded. The dynastic feuds were impregnated with the spirit of dogmatic fanaticism. And the religious schisms increased in proportion as the church enlarged its saintly aureole.

If anything could have staid the process of dissolution which sapped the vitality of that vast aggregation of nationalities known as the Roman empire, it would have been some measure by which free labor might have been rescued from its degradation. But the church rather discredited labor still more. "He who will not work, neither shall he eat," had been the refrain of the proletarian message. The church, on the contrary, preferred to elevate poverty and laziness above labor, choosing for its ideal type a man who will not toil nor spin, like the lilies in the field. Work was good enough for slaves, but free men were to live in pious contemplation of the works of God and to care only for their souls. Slaves were supposed to have no souls, for many centuries, and when they were finally granted the privilege of having half a soul they were expected to develop it into a whole soul and acquire spiritual freedom while the body was wasting away in servitude, poverty and misery. But

while the aristocratic clergy and their political colleagues thus perverted the letter and spirit of the Christian message, they took good care that their own souls lived in well-fed carcasses. They were willing to leave the passage of the soul to eternal freedom through starvation to the lower clergy and the poor lay-brethren.

If free labor could have been redeemed from its degradation, the political influence of the free citizens could have made itself felt. Free and self-respecting labor would have strengthened the manhood of the workers against the political and clerical blackmailers. But the church extolled slavish obedience to so-called superiors as most pleasing to God and discouraged a manhood which would have proclaimed that no man was good enough to rule another, politically or spiritually, without his consent. At the same time the leading lights of the church practiced none of this obedience toward the Roman authorities, but made every effort to control them.

The spiritual was professedly the true domain and concern of the church. But in reality the clerical politicians were after worldly, not after spiritual, power. They strove above all for the possession of the things which the dust and the moths corrupt, and, instead of preparing them-

selves for the kingdom of heaven, sought diligently to establish their rule on earth.

It might be asked, with good reason, whether the proletarian thinkers among the Christians did not realize this; whether they made no attempt to rescue the movement, and, if they did, how it happened that the proletariat was so easily foiled by the mere transformation of their revolutionary organization into a state church.

But, remember, that the aristocratization of the Christian movement extended over a period of centuries and took place so gradually, from generation to generation, that it was hardly noticed until it made itself disagreeable. And the frequent persecutions concealed the inroads made into the organization by elements which were fundamentally foreign to it. Besides, the proletariat had gagged itself from the very outset by veiling its revolutionary aims with theological phrases. While this served for a while to deceive the enemies of the movement, it also spread much unclearness among the new converts. The proletariat had thus burdened itself with a heavy handicap, which it was never able to throw off. For the great majority of the proletariat no doubt firmly believed in the theological mission of their movement, and what may have been a

conscious disguise for the minority, was a matter of spiritual conviction and satisfaction for the majority. The increase of misery among the masses in the Roman world was calculated to foster even a greater longing for spiritual consolation, and this gave to the conservative Christians a still better hold on the minds of their revolutionary brethren.

The communist practices were likewise perverted into their opposite, and thus served to prepare the defeat of the proletarian revolution. At first the communism of the primitive Christians had been one of the strongest bonds of comradeship among them. But when the religious element began to predominate over the proletarian revolution, a class of religious teachers and church officials developed among them. These men were entrusted with the management of the common property. To the extent that the management and teaching fell into the hands of a clergy, separate and distinct from the lay-members, the proletariat was delivered over to the forces that worked for its downfall. With the growth of the movement the desire for a better communication and affiliation between the scattered groups led to their gradual organization into provincial synods. At the end of the

second century the Christians of entire Roman provinces in Greece and Asia Minor had consolidated in provincial churches with a synod of bishops for an executive committee.

It was not long before these superior gentlemen felt the longing for greater worldly power swelling in their saintly bosoms. They began to arrogate the management of the common property to themselves. The local groups thus lost their self-government and fell under the control of the provincial synod. Democracy was superseded by aristocracy. To the same extent did the common wealth cease to be regarded as the rightful property of all in which the poor were to share equally with the rich.

Of course, many of the poorer clergy and proletarian lay-members did not submit tamely to this transformation of their organization. But what could they do? They were under the jurisdiction of the synod, and since only members of the clergy were eligible to such offices, and this clergy was recruited from the brainy men of the wealthy in proportion as the movement fell away from its primitive character, the poor clergy and laymen were powerless within the organization. There was nothing for them to do but to grumble and submit, or to leave the organization. But

outside of the organization life was still more uncertain and oppression more unbearable.

So the struggle between the Roman state and the Christian proletariat was gradually transformed into a struggle of this proletariat against the Roman church. Under the prevailing conditions this struggle naturally assumed the form of religious schisms. But whether these schisms arrayed the ruling classes against themselves or against the proletariat, the secret motive behind all great religious controversies was the control of the organization, and thus of its funds.

The militant proletariat of those times was originally the rural population, and the greatest resistance against the encroachments of the ruling clergy came from that population. With the growth of the cities, the intellectuals took an ever more prominent part in this struggle, so that it frequently seemed as though the cities were the actual centers of Christian radicalism. As a matter of fact, the cities were the breeding grounds of what modern socialists call "revisionism." So long as the west was mainly agrarian, while commerce was chiefly alive in the east, these struggles appear in the official histories as attempts of the east to carry more and more mysticism into the primitive proletarian doctrine.

For instance, the question whether Jesus was God or only godlike agitated the Christian mind for centuries, and it was not until the year 325, thirteen years after the so-called conversion of Constantine, that the delegates at the council of Nicaea decided by a free-for-all fight that Jesus and God were one. Fifty-six years later, in 381, the council of Constantinople used their pious fists to weld these two into a trinity by pounding the dogma of the holy ghost into them and into one another. Both councils marked a further defeat of the proletarian element. For, with every mystic addition, the control of the organization receded farther away from the proletariat and the original message lost its political character. This character passed from the doctrine to the hierarchy, and every prince of the church became in time a shrewd politician, thereby vindicating the judgment of men like Aristotle and Macchiavelli, who declared that religion is ever turned into a means of political rule.

And political rule was the only basis on which the church, as the heir of the Roman state, could maintain itself. So the church now deceived the proletariat about its true aims, just as the proletariat had once deceived the Roman state. Religion became a cloak for the oppressive aims of

the church, just as it had once been a cloak for the revolutionary aims of the proletariat. It is a bad rule that does not work both ways.

"The people insist on being deceived," said Bishop Synesius in 410 A. D. "For my part I shall always be a philosopher in my mind, but a priest in public." One could not say more plainly that to be a priest in public and a philosopher in private means to be an impostor. The same idea was expressed by Gregory of Nazians, who wrote to Hieronymus: "All that is required in order to make an impression on the people is talk. The less they understand the more they admire what you say. Our fathers and teachers frequently did not say what they thought, but only that which the conditions and needs of their times compelled them to say." So long as the "people" were in control of the Christian organization such a two-faced morality had no place among them. If under the dire necessity of the situation they adopted the religious disguise, they did so for the purpose of abolishing slavery. But the church adopted this disguise for the sake of saving the souls of the "people" by stealing their property and keeping them in servitude.

In the closing years of the Roman state the

oppression had been so unbearable that Roman citizens fled to the barbarian tribes on the borderlands and implored them to protect them against the Roman tax collectors. The church was able to survive only by converting these barbarians, who invaded the decrepit Roman empire on all sides. The method invariably pursued by the missionaries was to convert the chiefs and their retinue, to appeal to their class interests, and when they had these men to enter into a political alliance with them against their own people. In every case the baptism of the leaders signified a decrease of economic and political freedom for the majority of their followers, a greater oppression for women, a greater license for the rulers. To the extent that the tribal marriage customs were supplanted by monogamy, the right of the first night gained in favor among the rulers, and many princes of the church made a liberal use of it.

The church showed its disdain of female individuality in a still more marked manner in later times when it made monogamy impossible for the clergy. If anything is calculated to demonstrate the sordid motives and loose morality of the church, it was the institution of celibacy for the clergy. This measure became necessary, not be-

cause monogamy interfered with the spiritual duties of the clergy, but because the clerical fathers were stealing the property of the church in order to bequeath it to their sons. In the eleventh century this practice had become so common that Popes Leo IX. and Gregory VII. made the utmost efforts to enforce the celibacy of the clergy. But by this time the position of a bishop or abbot had become so lucrative that a regular trade in bishoprics and abbeys was carried on. Even the papacy was sold to the highest bidder. Gregory VII. finally took the bull by the horns and claimed the exclusive control of the entire church-property of Christianity. When, at the time of the reformation, the secular princes robbed the church of its property, there was no reason for the Protestant clergy to continue in celibacy, and so monogamy came once more into use among them.

In the monasteries and nunneries celibacy was a direct result of communist practices. But renouncing marriage is by no means identical with giving up love, and so the silent walls of the cloisters witnessed scenes which were not at all in harmony with the saintly expression worn on the faces of their inmates for every-day use.

By elevating the unmarried state above monog-

amy the church cast a reflection on marriage which led to the greatest excesses in the lives of laymen and clergy. Such open examples of licentiousness as that given by Pope Alexander VI., who lived on intimate terms with his own daughter, Lucretia Borgia, were by no means rare in the Middle Ages, and are directly traceable to the attempts to place dogma above economic conditions and human nature. It is well to remember these facts when the modern churches clamor about the alleged abolition of monogamy by Socialism.

The methods by which the church came into possession of the lands of its congregation was that of the Roman land sharks. The farmers would first transfer the titles of their lands to some influential man in exchange for protection against the practices of other prominent men and receive these lands back in trust for a lifetime. Gradually this practice amounted to a transformation of the freeholders into feudal serfs. In 475, Bishop Salvianus still denounced this practice as robbery. But in the eighth century this robbery had become a universally established custom in the dealings between church and peasants. Just as the German war chiefs, after the conquest of the Roman state, had stolen the

lands of their followers, so the church stole the land and the wealth of its unprotected and weak members. Formerly contributions to the church funds had been voluntary. Now they were transformed into compulsory tithes and mercilessly collected. The second council of Tours, in 567, demanded even a tenth part of the serfs as the just dues of the church. The church property had been originally considered the patrimony of the poor. In the fifth century things had already changed so that the church appropriated the greater part of this fund to its own uses, and only one-fourth was left for the poor. Finally this dwindled down to charitable gifts of soup and second rate clothing, and in many cases even this was denied, and the poor were left out in the cold world, with nothing but the gracious privilege to go to heaven.

Emperor Charlemagne attempted to reintroduce the division of the church property into four parts — one for the bishop, one for the clergy, one for general church expenses and one for the poor. But after his death the church came forth with a set of forged documents, which pretended to show that the wealth of the church was originally intended for the clergy, and that by "poor" were meant only the priests who had

taken the vow of poverty. The final evolution of this tendency, in connection with the celibacy mentioned previously, was logical. The big fish in the church swallowed the little fish.

The same materialist motives were also behind the introduction of the trade with relics, pictures, and the adoration of saints. Among the early Christians these things had been strictly forbidden. But nothing could prevent their introduction when the church found out that these things paid well. The trading spirit finally carried the clergy so far that they offered eternal salvation for money, and sent their agents all over Christendom offering absolution-slips at so much per sin. The financial benefits to be derived from the sale of papal blessings were so well appreciated by those in control of the church machinery that Pope Boniface VIII. instituted the so-called holy years in 1300, that is to say, periodical pilgrimages to Rome, where the pilgrims received the blessing direct at wholesale from the hands of the pope, and left in return their good money in the church funds and in the hotels of Rome. The collecting of the Peter's-pence became another lucrative source of income for the clerical financiers. One can understand how pleased the popes must have been when they

received large sums of such graft without the expenditure of anything else but wind, and we can sympathize with Pope Julius II., who, on one such occasion, said gleefully to one of his cardinals: "Well, brother, that fable of Jesus Christ pays well, doesn't it?"

We can also understand that the Italians were financially interested in keeping the papacy alive and located in Italy. This is the main reason why the Italians violently opposed the transfer of the pope from Rome to Avigon, and threatened to kill those cardinals who voted for a French pope. And although no population in Europe was so much disgusted with the popes as that of the church-state itself, still the opposition of the Italians to the popes never went far enough to hurt the church. This purely material interest is largely the cause which kept the Italians out of the Reformation.

When, in the eleventh century, the Turks captured the main ports of the Eastern Mediterranean and blocked the land passage to the trading posts of East India, the church and its votaries suddenly felt pangs of conscience for leaving the grave of "their" savior in the hands of the infidels. It is peculiar that they did not object to trading with these infidels so long as

the Turks and Saracens brought good money into the coffers of Christianity. In the tenth century, in the so-called holy German empire, the Christian city of Verdun had made plenty of money manufacturing guardians for the harems of the Moors in Spain. But when this trade began to decline, and the channels to the golden resources of the East were plugged by the Turks, then the gallant knights rose in their might against such impious practices, and proceeded to capture the holy sepulchre. They did not get it permanently, but instead they succeeded in capturing the harems of the infidels and in selling such male infidels into slavery as happened to fall into their saintly clutches. The church poured its blessings over this holy work. As late as January 8, 1454, the encyclical of Pope Nicholas V. declared that it was a good Christian practice "to put all Saracens, heathens and other enemies of Christ into eternal slavery."

The good Christians of modern times, regardless of confession, followed this illustrious example with great zeal. The brave old Puritans of New England, as well as the planters of the Southern United States, never lost an opportunity to demonstrate how well they agreed with Pope Nicholas V. And to this day you will find

highly respectable Christians in the South who sigh for the return of the "good old slavery days."

After the seaway to the East Indies and to America had been discovered, the holy sepulchre was quickly left in the hands of the infidels, and the pious conquerors turned their faces westward, where defenseless savages were waiting to be converted and relieved of their gold.

The increase of wealth among the ruling classes went hand in hand with an increase of infidelity among them. But to the same extent grew also their understanding of the usefulness of the church in keeping the masses under control. Much as the secular princes and knights were incensed over the grasping practices of the church, they did not care to go so far in their opposition as to abolish the papacy altogether. But other forces made themselves felt, which pushed church and conservative nobles forward in spite of themselves. And while the church more than any other organization of the Middle Ages obstructed every progress in science which exposed the fallacies of its dogmatism, it gradually found itself compelled to yield up more and more of that secular power which it had acquired and held with a miser's grip while preaching the

vanity of earthly things. But in spite of its opposition, the intellectual development of Europe broke through the bonds of dogmatism.

The forces which brought about this change were, first, the secular princes, who were eager to rob the church of its wealth; then the serfs, who were pressing for greater intellectual and economic freedom; then the capitalist class, which required more room for expansion and a more intellectual working class; then the industrial proletariat, the first signs of which began to appear in the thirteenth century, and which became a permanent addition to society in the sixteenth.

In all these revolutions against the church it was always the working class who showed the greatest zeal for education and knowledge, and always they only who were ready to carry the revolution to its last conclusion. And it was always the church and its historians who denounced this zeal for learning as an inspiration of the devil.

Owing to the widespread dissatisfaction with the church, the first general attack upon it had no distinctive class character. There was a general demand for a return to the "pure" primitive Christianity, which in the mouths of the

secular princes concealed their designs on the property of the church and their dislike of the primitive Christian democracy. In the mouths of the working class it meant a revival of the ancient proletarian revolution.

The natural result of this conglomeration of classes in the struggles against the church was that the ruling classes dropped the fight against the church whenever they had succeeded in robbing it of its property. And when the working classes were not satisfied to let the matter rest there, they soon found their former noble allies turning against them, killing the revolutionary leaders and driving their followers back into another form of economic servitude. No sooner had the serfs succeeded in enforcing their freedom from feudal fetters than they were transformed from free peasants into dependent wage-workers. And where the peasants had been free, as in Northeast Germany, the result of their conversion to Lutheranism was for them a transformation into feudal serfs.

This was the course of events in every country which developed a social movement against the feudal church. It was the fate which befell the Lollards under Wat Tyler and John Ball. Wycliffe, although in part the intellectual leader

of the English peasants, did not carry his opposition to the point where it could have become dangerous to the English ruling classes. Luther and the Reformation deserve the same reproach. And when the Anabaptists and Hussites, stung to the quick by the betrayal of the revolution, gathered in a class movement and forced the issue between them and all ruling classes, they were butchered, burned at the stake, drowned and buried alive by the thousands. These massacres, and the burning of innocent women as witches, are two of the blackest pages in the gory history of the church.

The revolutions of the Middle Ages were betrayed and drowned in seas of blood, just as the primitive Christian movement had been. But the men who committed these outrages in the Middle Ages, were not of a different nation and creed, but Christians against Christians. And in this respect the Protestant Christians showed themselves as cruel in their hatred and persecution of the working classes as the Catholic Christians. The "religion of love" showed itself powerless in the face of economic antagonisms.

Realize, if you can, the depth of depravity of that ecclesiastic monster, Catholic and Protestant, which stands with eyes uplifted to heaven while

its greedy talons are outstretched for your earthly possessions; which assumes the role of spiritual and moral adviser, while its own spirit is sordid and its morality that of the degenerate; which claims for itself absolute understanding and infallibility of knowledge about matters beyond the range of human thought, while it is pitifully ignorant of the natural laws of cosmic and social evolution; which pretends to supernatural wisdom and inspiration in its lurid imaginations, while its power rests on ignorance and most repulsive physical force; and which does all this under cover of the lie that it is following in the steps of the leader of the ancient Christian proletariat, whom it killed, and whose message it is distorting to suit its own grasping ends, while it always stands on the side of the oppressor against the oppressed.

It is revolting to think that millions of people, steeped in artificially created ignorance and held there by this gigantic ecclesiastic machine, should have been ruled for 1,600 years by this cruel monster, should bare their very hearts' secrets to it, should unconditionally surrender the unsullied and virgin minds of their sons and daughters to its devilish practices, and should slave their own lives away in the quest for the mere

necessities of life, in order that that monster and its prominent votaries might live in splendor and ease, contrary to the letter and spirit of their own teachings.

It is still more revolting to think that the men who now control this machine should be seeking to entrap by the same brazen means the modern revolutionary proletariat, the only element in human society which is really and truly following "in his steps."

If they really believe that he will come back to earth and sit in judgment, then their craven souls must tremble indeed. For they know in their inmost hearts that they are those of whom he said, according to their own reports: "Ye are the children of them which killed the prophets; fill ye then the measure of your fathers. Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?"

It will be better for them to trust to the generosity of the proletariat than to that of Christ. He threatened to send them to hell. The proletariat will only send them to work. But perhaps they think that there is not much difference. The proletariat knows better. It has been through hell, and it knows that the work by which the

monster made a hell of the world can be turned into life's own joy.

But the proletariat also knows that this can be done only by carrying that to its victorious conclusion which the primitive Christian proletariat so gloriously began, but which both the Catholic and Protestant churches betrayed and combatted. If every form of servitude, slavery, serfdom and wage labor exist side by side in the Christian world to-day, it is due largely to the fact that the Christian workingmen pay and feed their enemies in the church as they do those in political office.

It is only the class-conscious proletariat which knows its enemies in church and state, which combats them uncompromisingly, and which will finally overcome them, because it cannot be entrapped either in the meshes which were fatal to the primitive proletariat or in those which strangled the revolution of the Middle Ages.

And when the day of judgment arrives, as it surely will, the church of the ruling classes will fall with the systems which they supported, and the ancient and mediæval revolutionaries will beckon to us out of the past and say: "It is well!"

VI. The American Revolution and Its Reflex in France

Legend and romance have woven their poetical veil around the early history of the American colonies. It is this charming, but untrue, fiction which is instilled into the minds of the young, under the pretense of teaching history, and fostered in the willing brains of the adult by the literature and political customs of the day.

The halo of adventure floats around the dripping sails of the Mayflower. Its sturdy passengers are clothed with the fine raiment of Puritan martyrdom, and strut about with the firm step of the independent stalwart. Thrilling massacres and friendly embraces alternate in the relations of the settlers with the Indians. A martial tone pervades the entire picture, and the scent of blood and heroism is always in the air. The stern tone of this life is pleasantly relieved by occasional touches of love or pathos. And the untamed wilderness of prairie and woodland gives a fine finish to the whole.

Each little settlement, and later each colony, struggles by itself with the Indians and the wilderness. Whenever the Indians are not too bothersome one colony fights with another English, Dutch, French, and Spanish relieve the monotony of the Indian trail by occasional raids on one another. Of course, each colony duly prays to the same Lord to destroy the other. No one asks how it is that these Christians violate their brotherly message and yet, after killing one another, go serenely forth to teach the gospel of love to the Indians, provided it is not the Indian's turn to be massacred or massacre. It is as though these settlements were seized by sudden fits of insanity, during which they throw aside all the professed principles of Christianity and are more heathenish than the heathen Indians. But after the fit has passed away the colonists are once more sweet and loving Christians, if we can believe the historians. But what causes these fits? Oh, well, who would spoil such thrilling stories by asking searching questions?

This is the first period of American history.

Then the scene changes. In the second period the thirteen colonies have become English. But, strange to say, they agree less than ever. Although the majority of their people are English,

we hear that the English are oppressing the colonists; in other words, that the British English are oppressing the American English.

Suddenly we see great and exceptionally heroic and virtuous figures tower high above the rest of the colonists. The impression conveyed by the sudden appearance of these perfect human beings is that but for them the English would have continued to oppress the English. Now a storm of enthusiastic rebellion sweeps over the colonies. The Declaration of Independence proclaims in ringing tones the equality of all men. The "Father of Our Country" smashes the British lion. And "the land of the free and the home of the brave" sets up its own independent government, severing all bonds of blood and kinship with perfidious Albion.

What is it that is thus making deadly enemies of brothers of the same race, and of Christian brothers at that? Again our question is met by a frowning "Hush!"

That ends the second period of American history.

Then opens the third, in which we are now living. In this period one wave of prosperity is followed by another, interspersed by eras of exceptionally good feeling. Equality and freedom

sit enthroned in perpetuity. Life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness, and other so-called inalienable human rights, are enjoyed to the full. And everything is lovely, or, at least, it ought to be. And whoever raises any doubts and disturbs this dream by any matter-of-fact questions is either an anarchist or a trades unionist, or, perhaps, even a Socialist.

This period of American history, however, is not yet concluded.

But the unwritten or buried history of this country speaks a different language. The unwritten history of this country is the history of the American working people. And the buried history is slumbering under the dust of official documents, inaccessible to most of the proletarian thinkers, who would unearth it to convict the historians of the ruling classes of lying out of the very mouths of these classes.

Some day the history of the American working people will be written by one of them. In the following lines I shall unearth a few stray facts from the buried history, which the silver-tongued politician forgets to mention when he spouts forth his regulation Fourth of July oration to an audience of working people.

Let us tear aside the veil of legend and

romance and look at the history of this country with the calm eyes of the proletarian thinker. What kind of people were those who came from Europe to settle in America? And how do their paper declarations agree with their actions?

In Florida the Spaniards were the first to settle. They were Catholic Christians, and they established in Florida exactly that system of feudal despotism which we have seen in its full glory in the preceding chapter. Surely no one would expect for a minute that ideas of toleration, equality and human freedom could come from that quarter.

In Virginia the Jamestown colony was founded by settlers who were "mostly gentlemen," according to the old records. They naturally had their retinue of servants. The Roanoke colony, on the other hand, was composed mainly of "agriculturists with wives and children." There was no pretense of equality between these elements. The Church of England was the chartered religion, and, all paper declarations of tolerance notwithstanding, no adherents of other religions were tolerated in the early years of the colony.

Maryland was settled by Roman Catholics from England. Their charter provided for "religious

and civil freedom." But this religious freedom excluded those who did not agree with the leaders of the colony, and civil freedom was as unknown here as in the other colonies.

The Puritans were "simple agriculturists," but the Mayflower also carried such "personages of superior condition" as Winslow. And military adventurers like Miles Standish became very numerous among them. The Puritans wanted to worship God in their own way. But they were so intolerant toward others that at the time of the Puritan ascendancy in England protection to Catholics was withdrawn. And the Puritans who fled to America in order to escape from religious persecution quickly compelled members of other sects to flee to the backwoods. Roger Williams was driven out of the colony because he claimed that all sects had a right to equal protection from the law, and because he attacked the "foundations of civilization" by declaring that the king had no right to steal the lands of the Indians. But this was precisely what the pious Puritans were doing themselves. Praying, fighting and stealing were their chief occupations. Later they added the manufacture of rum and its exchange for African negroes to their other accomplishments. Their town meeting, which is

held up by most historians as the cradle of all American democracy, was a theocracy of the most exclusive character. Even in their rude colonial churches the place of every one was assigned according to social station.

With the increase of population, class distinctions and religious dissensions grew in all colonies. The persecution of the Quakers and the burning of so-called witches testify to the bigotry and intolerance of the New Englanders of those times.

"Social prejudices brought over from England still survived," writes Steele in his "Brief History of the United States." "Even in New England official positions were monopolized by a few leading families, and often descended from father to son. The catalogues of Harvard and Yale were long arranged according to the family rank of the students. . . . Distinctions of dress, to mark the higher and lower ranks of society, as in Europe, were sedulously preserved throughout even democratic New England. Calfskin shoes, up to the time of the revolution, were the exclusive property of the gentry. The servants wore coarse "neat's leather." Farmers, mechanics, laborers and workingmen generally were clothed in red or green baize jackets, leather or striped ticking breeches, and a leather

apron. . . . Hired women wore short gowns of green baize and petticoats of linsey-woolsey. . . . The colonial gentleman, however, was gay in his morning costume of silk or velvet cap and dressing gown, and his evening attire of blue, green or purple flowered silk or handsomely embroidered velvet, enriched with gold or silver lace, buttons and knee buckles. Wide lace ruffles fell over his hands, his street cloak glittered with gold lace, while a gold-headed cane and a gold or silver snuff-box were indispensable signs of his social position. . . . Articles of dress were limited or regulated by law. No person whose estate did not exceed 200 pounds sterling could wear gold or silver lace, or any lace above two shillings per yard. The selectmen were required to take note of the apparel of the people, especially their 'ribands and great boots.' Only the gentility, including ministers and their wives, received the prefix Mr. and Mrs. to their names. Others, above the rank of servant, were called goodman and goodwife. . . . The heads of the great Southern families lived like lords, keeping their packs of choice hunting dogs and their stables of blooded horses, and rolling to church or town in their coach and six, with outriders on horseback. Their spacious

mansions were sometimes built of imported brick. Within, the grand staircases, the mantels, and the wainscot reaching in quaint fashion from floor to ceiling, were of solid mahogany, elaborately carved and paneled. The sideboard shone with gold and silver plate, and the tables were loaded with luxuries of the old world. Negro servants thronged about, ready to perform every task. All labor was done by slaves, it being considered degrading for a white man to work. Even the superintendence of the plantation and slaves was generally committed to overseers, while the master dispensed a generous hospitality, and occupied himself with social and political life."

Where is the vaunted democracy in this description? In the northern colonies there were the caste distinctions of old Europe, with poor workers and servants duly kept in the station "to which it had pleased the Lord to assign them." In the South, a revival of the Roman latifundian slave economy decorated the poor white people with the degrading badge of work.

Is it likely that the theocracy of the North or the aristocracy of the South would divest themselves voluntarily of their superior position and privileges and declare that the workers and

servants, on whom they had looked down so long, were their equals?

Yet, unless a popular revolution took place, the theocracy and aristocracy were the only ones who could have put such a declaration into practice. They held all the essential offices, North and South, and controlled those who held inferior public positions. They made the laws and enforced them, especially against the "inferior classes." And these laws were as severe as inherited mediæval bigotry and cruelty could make them. The stocks and the pillory were in common use for trifling misdemeanors. One of the first official structures erected in some settlements, together with the church, was the gallows. In New England, at one time, there were twelve offenses, and in Virginia seventeen, punishable by death. And most of these "offenses" were petty violations of the "sacredness" of private property. Imprisonment for debt was common, and more than half of the working people were constantly in debt. When laborers were scarce those who had debts, instead of being imprisoned, were leased out to their debtors, to work off their debts, just as negroes are in the South this very day. Even the private lives of the working people were regulated by strict laws. So long as

the Puritans held sway in New England the working people had to rise and go to bed as soon as the town bell rang. In some settlements the drum and the bugle took the place of the bell.

At the time of the American revolution most of the mediæval methods of justice had been mitigated. Religious dissensions had lost their openly political character. But class distinctions were as glaring as ever, and the mass of working people were politically either disqualified or entirely disfranchised.

There was not a workingman in any of the legislative bodies of the thirteen colonies. The fifty-one men who assembled in Philadelphia in 1776, to agree on a common proclamation to the American people, were all "gentlemen." Not one workingman signed the Declaration of Independence. There were at that time about two million inhabitants in the colonies, but only a few thousand "gentlemen" started all the fuss that led to the revolution.

How was it possible that these gentlemen, proud of their social privileges and not in the least inclined to give them up, should declare that "all men are born equal?" What did they mean when they wrote that, or did they mean anything at all by it? Was it, perhaps, simply

one of those misleading phrases with which politicians are so liberal whenever they need the working people to pull the chestnuts out of the fire for them?

Just think that phrase over a little. In what respect are all men born equal? Are they born physically and intellectually equal? No one is silly enough to believe that? Are they born economically equal? We have seen that they were not so in colonial days, and we know that they are not today. Are they born socially equal? It would be absurd to think of any social equality without economic equality. Were they born politically equal? Not at all. Great masses of working people were politically disfranchised in colonial days, just as they are in this "glorious republic" today. The signers of the Declaration of Independence did not have the least desire to give them equal political rights with "gentlemen." Of course the entire female sex was barred from politics. Were they equal before the law? No thinking person will believe for a moment that working people without political rights were treated on equal terms with gentlemen by judges who were themselves gentlemen.

Then what did that phrase signify? Did it mean that all men ought to be born equal, or

ought to be socially, politically or economically equal? In that case what did the revolutionary gentlemen do to make them so? How did they propose to help all men, regardless of wealth and rank, to secure possession of their "inalienable rights"?

They did nothing, absolutely nothing, to back up their paper declaration by deeds. On the contrary, they did everything in their power to keep men in inequality. Not only did they perpetuate and secure the privileges of the gentlemen, but they also took strong measures to prevent the working people from interpreting the Declaration of Independence "too literally."

Incidentally it may be remarked at this point that the gentlemanly heroes of the American revolution were by no means such paragons of virtue as the historians painted them. Washington, the man who could not tell a lie, had stolen about 30,000 acres of land from the English government while he worked as a government surveyor. And when his possession was endangered by the "Quebec Act" he sent another gentleman, Benjamin Franklin, to London for the purpose of squaring things by "seeing" certain government officials. This certainly shows considerable business ability on the part of Washing-

ton, and a man who could steal in this business-like manner must have also possessed that other indispensable qualification for business success,an ability for lying.

From the point of view of the business class, Washington may have been an ideal gentleman, and when they nominated him for president they evidently knew what they were doing. But from the standpoint of workingmen he was a shrewd and calculating exploiter. He tried to import Germans from the Palatinate to work on his lands, but the conditions which he imposed on them were so hard that even those German farmers, who were accustomed to oppression, refused to go to America and work for the " Father of our Country."

Jefferson was a typical Southern gentleman of the most aristocratic tastes and habits. His democracy was of the kind that stood on the shoulders of the disfranchised whites and slaves. He was as unscrupulous a land-grabber as Washington, Franklin, Hamilton and other gentlemen. John Hancock was to have been tried for defrauding the customs on the very day when the first shots of the revolution were fired at Lexington. He had indulged in the gentlemanly occupation of smuggling. All these gen-

tlemen had every interest to make the colonies independent of England, for every one of them risked losing some illegally acquired wealth if they did not beat the English. But what did that matter to the working people of the colonies, who labored honestly and kept these fine gentlemen of "unsmirched character" in a privileged social and political position?

Similar mental reservations must also be made in regard to the foreign gentlemen who were so filled with enthusiasm for "American liberty," according to the historians, that they gave up honors and wealth in Europe and hastened across the ocean to spill their genteel blood for the liberation of the American people, without any assurance of reward. Lafayette, the French "lover of liberty and democracy," was a haughty aristocrat of the most exclusive pretensions, and cared so little for the liberty of the people that he was one of the first to shoot them down when they rose in the French revolution a few years later. Steuben, another supposed lover of liberty, was one of the despotic and overbearing drill-masters of Frederick the Great, and was engaged by Washington for the purpose of instilling more "discipline and respect for superiors" into the refractory heads of the American soldiers. Do

you suppose for a moment that such men as these had any sympathy with a popular revolution? No. The phrases of liberty in their mouths were simply inspired by their hatred of the English business gentlemen. This hatred was shared by the American business gentlemen, and this was the secret source of their mutual protestations of love for the liberty of the American people.

The great mass of the inhabitants of the American colonies had no concern in the wrongs which drove this gentry to revolt against England. Take, for instance, the Stamp Act. It decreed that all legal documents, newspapers, pamphlets, etc., should bear stamps bought from the English government. But in the first place most of the colonists did not read any newspapers or pamphlets, nor had they much to do with any legal documents. In the second place, it is absurd to suppose that a tax of a few pennies should cause resentment enough to start a revolution. Or take the regulations against smuggling. It was the "gentry," especially the Puritan gentry of New England, who embarked in this honorable way of making an easy living. The great mass of the two million inhabitants were innocent of any smuggling inclinations, and very few of them, indeed, had any opportunity to engage in

smuggling. Or, take the tea tax, which is generally supposed to have been the straw which broke the camel's back. It was the gentry which consumed the bulk of the imported tea, for the mass of the settlers lived on home-raised goods and had no money for such luxuries as tea. The same applies to all other manufactured imports from England. In the same breath the historians tell us that the mass of the settlers were self-supporting, and that they were mad over a tax on a few articles which most of them did not use at all, and which at the worst amounted to a few pennies a year per capita. Some historians admit that this tax was too trifling to cause all the excitement, and that it was the principle of taxation without representation to which the colonists objected. But the mass of the colonists had never known what it meant to have any representation, and most of them did not expect to have any even after the victorious conclusion of the revolution. The gentry remained in the saddle, the same as before.

It was this gentry that started the revolution, not the working people. It was the gentleman, Patrick Henry, who assailed the British king in the Virginia legislature. It was a crowd of gentlemen's sons who led the party that threw

the tea overboard in Boston harbor. A crowd of workingmen would have been jailed for disturbing the peace if they had attempted such an exploit.

Of course, such acts as the compulsory quartering of soldiers in the houses of the colonists, the searching of people's houses without cause, and similar things, made the friction between England and the colonies more general. But these events did not take place until the American gentlemen had stirred up considerable trouble about the restriction of American manufacture and commerce by the English authorities. And this restriction was the fundamental cause of the American revolution. The American business men wanted to expand and be free to exploit the American colonists. And because the English business men thought that they could pluck the American colonists quite as well themselves, that is the reason why the American business men wanted the American colonists to fight and drive the English business men out of the country.

But the American colonists were not at all enthusiastic to chase one set of masters out of the country in order to install a home-grown set. At no time during the revolution was there any such widespread enthusiasm for war as the historians

would have us believe. The fact is, the various states were never able to get their full quota of volunteers, and congress was more than once considering the advisability of ordering a forced draft. While the American army was starving at Valley Forge, the farmers of Pennsylvania refused to furnish them provisions, because the English army in Philadelphia paid better prices. Congress was furious about this, and it was urged by several members to compel farmers to furnish provisions for the army of the revolution. Martial law was actually declared in Pennsylvania for the purpose of securing supplies. But I don't blame the farmers. They proceeded on exactly the same principles toward the revolutionary gentlemen that these gentlemen observed against the farmers and the rest of the working people.

It is a fact which all the historians have persistently suppressed that the revolutionary gentlemen were constantly afraid that their revolution might suddenly become an " American revolution " in the sense that the American working people might at any time turn against all gentlemen, whether English or American, and chase them all out of the country. That is one of the reasons why the colonial army was permeated

with foreign gentlemen. And when the American people really rose in rebellion against the American gentleman, as they did in Shays' rebellion in 1786, or in the whiskey rebellion in 1794, they were promptly suppressed by force of arms. The same fate befell those soldiers of the revolution who attempted to frighten the members of congress into paying them their long due wages. Washington joined in calling them an "insolent and licentious soldiery, banditti, a disgrace to the army," etc., and sent a strong detachment of soldiers to capture and court-martial them. And the alien and sedition laws, although professedly aimed at foreigners, were practically an attempt to suppress free speech and a free press, which might oppose the aristocratic tendencies of the majority of congress.

All these facts show plainly that the American revolution was a business revolution. It was not fought to free the American working people, but the American business men. Nor was it fought to realize the "eternal principles of liberty, equality and justice." And if it operated with general phrases of liberty, equality and justice, this was but an idealized expression of the self-interest of the business leaders of the revolution, and served at the same time as a sop to

the working people, which should, however, never get beyond the stage of mere phrases.

Independence and freedom for America signified nothing more than independence and freedom for the American business men. It was they who wrote the Declaration of Independence, declared war, levied an army which they could not support, created a navy which they could not equip, issued pledges for money which they could not pay, made alliances with foreign powers, because they could not get soldiers enough at home willing to fight for them, and appointed a military dictator for the defense of their interests against the English business men and against those American workingmen who might entertain the preposterous idea that the Declaration of Independence really meant something for the working class. And these business men saw to it that Hamilton's words were fulfilled: "That power which holds the purse strings absolutely must rule."

This is "the idea of liberty and self-government in which the nation was born." It was the idea of freeing the American working class in the name of human liberty from the rule of English business men and placing them under the rule of American business men. This idea has cer-

tainly nothing in common with the proletarian idea of liberty and self-government. It was strictly a business idea, and it is absurd to appeal to the American people as the defenders of this idea in the interest of the proletarian revolution, since most of them never thought of defending it.

Nor were the business men of the various colonies ever completely united in defense of even their own idea of liberty and self-government. Their economic interests clashed too much for that. The Southern landowners were always jealous of the Northern industrials, and vice versa. Even while their revolution was being fought and their success hung in the balance, they were continually fighting over their economic interests. The industrials wanted a centralized "coercive union" and a "strong federal government," and they enforced it against the wishes of the landowners. The national government actually confiscated the state lands and made national lands of them, in order to be able to give sufficient security to the money-lenders for the national debt. Hamilton's entire efforts were directed toward the end of making the industrial and financial capitalists the rulers of this country. This was the essence of all quar-

rels over state rights and national sovereignty, however much the honorable gentlemen might try to disguise this fact by parliamentarian phrases. The civil war later on decided this issue still more in favor of industrial capitalism. But it is still raging under a changed form, and it will last as long as there are capitalists with clashing economic interests.

Three years after the publication of the Declaration of Independence, and one day after Jefferson's election as governor of Virginia, the legislature of that state still feared a breaking up of the confederacy and looked to foreign powers for help against the other patriots. Even after the ratification of the peace treaty with England, patriots of the Hamilton stripe were still clamoring for more centralized national power. From the standpoint of those who see in the American revolution a triumph of the natural rights doctrine this must be unspeakably sad. But from the proletarian point of view it is but the crowning of the entire structure for which the revolution had been fought, the temple of the kingdom of American capitalism. This is what Hamilton had been working for from the outset, and he did not rest until he had succeeded in delivering the whole country into the hands of the

industrials and financiers by establishing a national bank and mortgaging all thirteen colonies to them as a security for money lent by them to the national government. This money would not have been forthcoming had not the circumstances compelled the states of the South to submit to the sovereignty of the national government. Neither would the revolution have been won without the support of the French business men. Is it likely that this class who mowed down thousands of revolutionary French working people a few years later, would have spent good money to free the American working people?

The revolution of the American business men was the prelude to that of the French. And in many respects the French business men literally copied the methods and phrases of their American colleagues. There was only this historical difference that the place of the English king was taken by the French king, and that of the English business men by the French feudal nobility. Incidentally the Christian churches were almost overthrown in France. And while the American business men finally controlled their national government, the French business men fled from the wrath of the revolutionary working people into

the arms of the military dictator, Napoleon Bonaparte. But a part of the French working people, the same as of the American, were duped into fighting for their future master and forging the new chains that were to bind them henceforth.

In either case the capitalists were the real winners.

Neither the early settlers nor the revolutionary gentlemen abolished class rule, and with it the private ownership of the instruments of social production. They merely changed the form of this ownership by vesting it in different hands. They perpetuated the fundamental evil from which all civilization had been suffering for thousands of years. They declared with Hamilton that this fundamental evil could not be removed, and that they could deal only with its effects. This was the cause of all the contradictions between their theories and their practice.

Under these circumstances, an American workingman who celebrates the Fourth of July is like a French workingman who celebrates the 18th Brumaire of Napoleon Bonaparte, or a Russian workingman who celebrates the victory of the Romanoffs. He is celebrating the victory of his oppressors.

Let the masters celebrate their own victories.

THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

The class-conscious working people the world over celebrate the First of May.

VII. Bourgeois Revolutions in Europe

The history of bourgeois revolutions is a succession of compromises. Much boasting and wordy valor before the commencement of hostilities, cowardice and vacillation in moments of supreme decision, and an incapacity for grasping the full fruits of victories gained for them by others, that is the ever-recurring spectacle in every attempt of the bourgeois leaders to gain control of the political power. Not one of the capitalist classes of Europe has ever fully overcome in politics its feudal opponents but has been compelled to share its powers with them. And in the United States, where the capitalist class has had a field free from feudal relics at the outset, the well-to-do American bourgeois has ever shown a houndish willingness to fawn at the feet of the feudal powers of Europe, or to hobnob with the nobility, in spite of all pretended democracy at home. The American capitalist class owed its victory over England in the revolution to feudal help from Europe, and the pedigree-

proud Sons and Daughters of the Revolution have never forgotten their feudal friends. Besides, the bourgeois politicians at Washington have always been easily led by way of the golden wires that connect the diplomatic offices with the national banks, and in both of these so-called public institutions the feudal powers are still more strongly represented than most people imagine.

Indecision and compromise are bred in the bourgeois blood. It was the fate of the bourgeoisie to be born between two fires. In the attempt to extinguish the one and keep from being extinguished by the other the bourgeois nature developed that weather-vane mind for which it has become historically disreputable.

On one side the capitalist class had to clear away the feudal barriers which obstructed its path; on the other to keep the working people under control and use them as objects of exploitation for profit. This was not so difficult as it might seem at first sight. For the economic position of the feudal nobles had become untenable long before the bourgeoisie threatened their political supremacy. And the working people were so ignorant and divided against themselves that little diplomacy was required to keep them under control. Indeed, had not the petty trading

spirit dominated the bourgeois mind at the expense of the manly virtues, it could have made itself the exclusive master of Europe as easily as the feudal church and nobility had once done. But the typical bourgeois is, for historical reasons, a better business man than a hero, and therefore he has always been a sorry spectacle on the world's stage. He is easily scared, shoots at mosquitoes with twelve-inch guns, and is beastly brutal and overbearing, like all cowards, when he is sure of the weakness of his antagonist.

During all the centuries in which the bourgeois struggled to get political control of the various countries of Europe, and to maintain his temporary supremacy, not one instance is recorded where he was fully conscious of his historical mission, or ever fully overcame his adversaries. Nor has the bourgeois ever fought any of his revolutions single-handed, or ever won a single great victory by his own unaided strength. He has preferred to rely on other classes to do the fighting for him.

The first great bourgeois uprising was the Reformation, in Germany, in the sixteenth century. At that period the German bourgeoisie was in no way ripe for any political supremacy and its ultimate defeat was inevitable under the

prevailing conditions. But the same might be said with still greater justification of the peasants who bore the brunt of the fighting. Nevertheless the peasants did not hesitate, but acted with determination and dogged tenacity. Not so the bourgeoisie. Although this class was the party most interested in the downfall of feudalism, it hesitated and halted, and left its natural allies, the lower nobility and peasantry, in the lurch at the very moment when a decided advance against the feudal powers would at least have cleared the track for the unhampered development of its economic condition. The peasants were finally the only fighters who carried the revolution to its bitter end and succumbed. For the next two hundred years all national activity in Germany was drowned in a flood of endless border fights among the nobility and against the authority of the emperor. The bourgeoisie suffered more than other classes from these conditions, but they managed nevertheless to participate in the exploitation of the peasants and city proletarians.

The second great fight of the European bourgeois against feudalism took place in England, in the seventeenth century. Economically and politically, the British bourgeoisie of that period

was still too young for lasting supremacy. But it was old enough to stand on its own feet and show what stuff it was made of. The middle class of the towns started its revolution by calling upon the peasants for help. The peasants responded nobly. But no sooner did matters come to a climax than the bourgeoisie lost its nerve. Had it not been for the peasantry and city plebeians the bourgeoisie would never have gathered even those fruits of social evolution which were then rotten ripe. As it was, the peasants and proletarians, who did most of the fighting, pushed matters considerably further than was agreeable to the bourgeoisie. The revolution was finally settled to the satisfaction of the British bourgeoisie by a compromise with the nobility, by which the latter retained the political control, while the former were given more liberty for industrial expansion. These two classes united to crush the revolutionary peasants and plebeians, and, when they had them down, mutually exploited them. One hundred years after Cromwell, the yeomen, who had been the bravest allies of the bourgeoisie, were almost exterminated by the business methods of the nobility and its bourgeois partners.

The British nobility easily controlled the politi-

cal power against the bourgeoisie, in spite of occasional disputes, until the economic development favored the industrial capitalists far more than the land-owning aristocracy. With the improvement of the technical processes of industry by steam and machinery, the industrial bourgeoisie secured economic advantages which imperiously demanded greater political power for them. In the beginning of the nineteenth century finally the British bourgeoisie pressed its political demands and won its greatest victory in the repeal of the corn laws, in 1832. But even then the landed aristocracy retained almost exclusive control of the political offices, because the bourgeoisie, frightened by the ominous activity of the proletariat, which capitalism had created, showed once more its historical weakness by relying on the aristocracy for leadership and protection.

The British bourgeois continues to this day in his inferior role, under the leadership of the aristocracy, whom he regards as his natural superiors. The aristocracy, on the other hand, have become good capitalist business men, and know how to beat the bourgeois at his own game. In spite of his great wealth and titles, the British bourgeois has never shed the petty trader's skin,

and the aristocrats are the real capitalist representatives of the United Kingdom.

In France the bourgeois was fortunate enough to hear the hour of his political birth strike at the precise moment when the king and the nobility had reached the end of their tether, and when the peasants were rising in revolt. The economic development fairly lifted the French bourgeoisie into the saddle, without any great effort on their part. The bankrupt feudal government practically invited them to take hold of the reins. Neither the king nor the nobles nor the clergy were able to offer them any effective resistance. The economic position of the feudal classes had become utterly antagonistic to the dominant mode of production, and for the moment they were all so terrified by the uprising of the peasants and proletarians that the leadership fell quite naturally into the hands of the bourgeoisie, who had made itself for almost a century the intellectual mouthpiece of the anti-feudal classes.

True, this bourgeoisie was the very last element in French society on which one could rely for leadership. Here, as in all other countries, the hour of the revolution found this class wholly unprepared and without any definite program of

action. The only thing which brought the bourgeoisie to the front was the fact that they were the economically best situated class, and had become the intellectual leaders by virtue of their industrial development. Feudalism in France did not fall through the determined initiative of the bourgeoisie, but of its own rottenness. No revolution was ever won so easily. Indeed, but for the threatening attitude of the peasants and city proletarians, it is very doubtful whether the French bourgeoisie would have been able to overthrow the feudal nobility in politics any better than their British colleagues had done, in spite of the favorable historical circumstances surrounding the revolution in France. But even so they did not remain the political masters very long, with all their increasing industrial supremacy.

While the French bourgeoisie, as a class, was not conscious of its historical mission, any more than the bourgeoisie of other nations, still its leading thinkers were well aware of the economic causes of the political revolution. But the political representatives of this class pretended to be guided purely by abstract love of humanity. So much did they dwell on ideal principles of liberty, equality and fraternity, that they de-

ceived their own historians about their true motives. The German idealist, Hegel, for instance, a great admirer of the French revolution, wrote enthusiastically: "The idea of right asserted its authority all at once, and the old frame-work of injustice could offer no resistance to its onslaught. A constitution, therefore, was established, in harmony with the conception of right, and on this foundation all future legislation was to be based."

But the bourgeoisie has never had any luck with its constitutions, even when it was quite unhampered in its work, as it was in the American revolution. Somehow a bourgeois constitution has to be patched when the ink is hardly dry on it, and in spite of continued patching, the old thing is so threadbare that it is almost never used for any practical purposes, but only hung up for show on special occasions.

So it was also in the French revolution. Nobody knew exactly what the new organization of society was to be like. So little did the bourgeois politicians understand their own class-interests that they were at first perfectly willing to include the king in their new constitution. But very soon they became suspicious of him and of everybody else, especially of one another. Ab-

stract liberty, equality and justice refused to materialize at their bidding, even on paper. Still, somebody had to govern and keep others who wanted to do the same from assuming power. So, a general assembly constituted itself into a governing body, only to find out to its great dismay that it could not accomplish its aims. Then the circle was narrowed more and more. A directorate of five men was the last attempt at bourgeois government in the French revolution, and quickly ended in the assumption of power by one man — Napoleon Bonaparte, who was hailed as the great savior of society, and who crushed the really revolutionary element, the working class, with the iron power of the despot. Thus the bourgeoisie publicly proved its incapacity to govern. And this is the class who ask the revolutionary proletariat for a complete plan of the co-operative commonwealth, with detailed specifications, before they are willing to admit that Socialism is more than a dream!

The failure of the French bourgeoisie under such favorable conditions is so much more ridiculous as they proclaimed that they were going to set up the eternal reign of "Reason." Yet they waded through rivers of useless bloodshed, with all their reason, enthroned the goddess of reason

by decree of the national convention on November 10, 1793, overthrew her and endorsed God on June 8, 1794, and abandoned him once more for some nondescript on July 27, 1794, with plenty of bloody sacrifices on each occasion. They behaved like children left alone in the deep woods.

What they did not understand, and do not understand to this day, is that they cannot make any ideal constitution that will meet the requirements of all members of a society composed of exploiters and exploited. So long as the feudal powers held sway despotism sat on the throne undisguised. But when the bourgeoisie attempted to establish a reign of universal reason on a foundation of disguised despotism, they came to grief, and finally had to seek shelter from the fury of the exploited working class under the protecting wings of the military despot.

The same spectacle repeated itself again and again from the time of the French revolution to the middle of the nineteenth century, not only in France, but also in the countries of Central Europe. In every case the bourgeoisie showed itself incapable to hold the political power. Every attempt on their part to set up a purely bourgeois government ended in the assumption of power either by some military adventurer or by

the feudal forces. And when a bourgeois republic was finally established in France after the downfall of Napoleon III., in 1870, the feudal nobility still continued its intrigues, and was more than once on the point of overthrowing the republic. And if it were not for the watchful eyes and determined opposition of the modern proletariat there is little doubt that the royalist and the feudal elements of France would have triumphed again in politics over the bourgeoisie. At any rate, if the French bourgeois republic endures, it will not be due to the competence of the French bourgeoisie.

The fourth uprising of the bourgeoisie took place in Germany, Austria and Italy, in 1848-49. But instead of coming as a sweeping and resistless movement, begotten of the manhood of the bourgeoisie, it came as a weak and half-hearted echo of the working class revolution in France. And yet the industrial development of the middle class was pressing them forward and prompted them to action. But the fear of the revolutionary working class lamed their hands before a shot had been fired in Central Europe.

There was no natural cohesion among the middle classes of any of the three countries mentioned. Germany was a conglomeration of some

three-score duodecimo kingdoms and principalities, with Prussia as the only large power. Austria, nominally still a part of the German confederation, but actually the most formidable opponent of Prussia, was rent by disputes of Germans, Tsechs, Slavs and Hungarians. Italy was as much a collection of diminutive states as Germany, with the church-state as an additional source of disunion. The feudal nobility was strongly entrenched in all three countries, while the monarchs held the military power and were ready to wield it mercilessly. National bourgeois revolutions were, therefore, out of the question in Central Europe, although the need of national unity arising out of their economic interests expressed itself in all three countries by vain and vague bourgeois dreams of national power.

As for any common international action of the bourgeoisie of Central Europe against feudalism, such a thought went beyond the petty trader's horizon. Some of the leaders of the French revolution had, indeed, realized the fact that it was a European, not a national, question, which they were called upon to settle. But this understanding did not beget any practical results. On the contrary, misled by blind individualism, the

bourgeoisie of one country sought to injure that of another and to profit by the misfortunes of its foreign colleagues in business.

So little revolutionary spirit did the middle class of Central Europe possess that they never thought of capturing the political power by determined action until it was too late. And then they were not prepared for such an emergency, showed themselves cowardly and undecided, as usual, and finally aided the feudal powers to crush the working people, who were the only element determined to bring the revolution to an issue.

The German bourgeoisie were so modest in their demands, in spite of all their braggadocio mouthings, that they expected Frederick William IV. to grant them a constitution out of the goodness of his royal heart. They really had no very definite idea themselves as to what that constitution should be, and were willing to let the government draw it up for them. It took them quite a while to realize that the king wanted something considerably different from their wishes, and when they finally realized it their first thought was not to consolidate their forces, but to exclude the Austrian bourgeoisie from representation and transform the Prussian government into

a constitutional monarchy, which should serve their own interests exclusively. Thus their petty traders' spirit showed itself from the outset. Instead of uniting their forces and making the revolution general, they disrupted their own ranks and strengthened the feudal reaction. They had not learned anything by the preceding fifty years of bourgeois revolution in France.

In Austria it was only the population of Vienna which was for a short time united against the feudal power, and this was not due to the bourgeoisie of that city, but to the working class and the students. As soon as the feudal powers asserted their military strength and diplomacy, the bourgeoisie of Austria-Hungary, including that of Vienna, showed itself as fickle as their colleagues in other countries. And so ignorant were they of the political conditions of Europe that the same men who mounted the barricades of Vienna against Austrian feudalism enlisted enthusiastically in the Austrian army to crush the revolution in Italy.

Just as the British bourgeoisie had helped to ruin their former allies of the yeomanry, just as the French bourgeoisie had misled the peasants by glittering promises of freedom from feudal rule, and then robbed them of their rights of

commons and suppressed the barely acquired right of assembly of the city proletariat, so the Prussian bourgeoisie helped to restore the feudal oppression over the peasantry of the eastern half of Prussia after they had freed themselves by their own exertions. And if the Austrian bourgeoisie did not treat its peasant allies in the same way, it was only because the Austrian peasants cleared away the feudal rubbish so thoroughly in the country districts that even the victorious reaction could not undo their work.

The utter folly and blindness of the suicidal course of the bourgeoisie appears all the more appalling when we remember that every one of their faint-hearted acts not only restored their own feudal antagonists to power, but also rendered invaluable services to the Russian autocracy, the bulwark of all feudal oppression in Europe. And no more damning charge can be brought against them than that today, when the Russian proletariat is pressing its own bourgeoisie forward and threatening feudal autocracy, which has obstructed the progress of industrial development in all Europe, the bourgeoisie of Western Europe is laying diplomatic snares, in co-operation with the Russian autocracy, for the primary purpose of stemming the advance of

the Japanese bourgeoisie in Eastern Asia and with it the rise of the international proletariat that is close upon them. And there is a great deal of evidence that the bourgeois powers at Washington are in league with this project.

In the fifth bourgeois revolution of Europe, that of the Russian bourgeoisie, the proletariat has assumed the leading role almost exclusively. The Russian capitalist class, too cowardly and servile to openly oppose the bureaucracy and feudal powers, are but driftwood on the tide of the revolution. Their leaders have played, and continue to play, the role of nerveless knaves, while the proletariat is striking the blows that will crush autocracy and leave the bourgeoisie masters by force of economic conditions. And if the Russian capitalists will not have to share the political power with the surviving feudal aristocracy, it will not be due to any ability or valor of their own, or of their colleagues in other countries. World-wide is the cheer that comes from the hearts of the proletarians of all countries for their revolutionary comrades in Russia. But the bourgeoisie of the world has hardly one word of encouragement, hardly one mite of practical assistance, for the emancipation of the Russian bourgeoisie from feudal rule.

Instead of using all their powers for the establishment of international bourgeois supremacy, economically and politically; instead of taking this only course consistent with their professed principles, the bourgeoisie are still at work today obstructing their own progress with the same shortsightedness and dog-in-the-manger rapacity which has characterized them throughout their historical career. International from economic necessity, yet politically narrow-minded jingoes; cosmopolitan in commerce, and yet imbued with the spirit of the petty trader; a world-power, but unable to rise to their magnificent possibilities, the bourgeoisie are everywhere behaving like the despicable and incapable compromisers that they are.

Their petty profit-mongering is driving them forward. But the fear of the revolutionary proletariat is even stronger than their love of profits. Instinctively they know that they find in the feudal powers the most unscrupulous and brutal enemies of the working class. For this reason we see them today, when they might be at the head of the world's progressive forces, everywhere in league with their foes of former historical epochs. They are surreptitiously begging for the support of the feudal nobility, of the re-

actionary church, of the criminal element, and of the most degraded and ignorant portion of the working class. To prevent the emancipation of the only consistent and historically conscious class, the modern proletariat, has become one of the absorbing aims of their lives. And at the bottom of this aim is nothing but their sordid worship of profits.

So they pretend to sneer at aristocracy, but they imitate its assumption of manners and style of living. They scoff at religious dogmas in the privacy of their clubs and offices, but they foster them for political purposes. They denounce corruption, crime, prostitution, but they cannot get along without them and have never seriously tried to eliminate them. They point with pride to the progress of society under their rule, but they have resisted it and are resisting it today, step by step, and would not go forward one inch, unless the inexorable and to them incomprehensible laws of their own development lashed them ahead in spite of all their stubborn renitence.

They brag of their high ideals and pure motives. But they have never realized in actual life a single one of the ideals of their youth. They are the inventors of the human rights

theory, but they have never done one thing to materialize it in practice. On the contrary, they have always fought it bitterly, wherever the historical conditions pressed for its realization, and in no country of this globe more so than in the United States, its birthplace. And if this theory found sporadically and in isolated places a short opportunity to express itself in deeds, this happened very much against their will, and they hastened to stifle it, lest the working class should assume too much right.

Their motives? Those which they publicly pretended to have were never their real motives, and the only consistent motive that actuated them, the greed for money, was a sordid one and never openly avowed by them, but always idealized before the world and excused before their own consciences.

They lifted absolute truth and absolute justice upon the shield and made themselves the champions of these false goddesses. But no class has lied so freely and violated all concrete justice so flagrantly as the capitalist class. "Thou shalt *not kill*" has been thundered from their pulpits in all variations, but no class has spilled human blood so wantonly and on such flimsy pretexts as they.

Nevertheless they have the effrontery to claim that no class is so capable and so justly entitled to rule the world as they.

History brands them as the most incapable and aimless class that ever held the helm of society. And it will write upon the grave of the bourgeoisie the flaming epitaph: "Here lies the capitalist class — a traitor to its ideals, an incompetent in government, and an enemy of mankind."

PROLETARIAN WORLD MOVEMENT

VIII. The Proletarian World Movement

The early Christian movement expressed the independent intellectual life of the international proletariat in the Roman empire. It signified the emancipation of the minds of the lowly of all nationalities in that empire from the deadening influence of ruling priests and princes. For the first time since the dissolution of the primitive sex-organizations, the masses were aroused by the Christian message to a realization of their own individuality and their own peculiar position and mission in the world.

Thousands of years had gone by without any intellectual advance beyond the narrow and self-centered thoughts of the ruling classes. With the early Christian agitation, the real mind of humanity began once more to think along lines which fell in with the natural evolution of the entire human race. And this self-conscious intellectual life spontaneously generated out of its economic and political conditions the evolutionary ideals of international brotherhood, peace at

home and abroad, freedom from all oppression, equality and justice for all.

The treason of the possessing Christians under Constantine changed all this. The church transformed the Christian life message of a "kingdom of heaven" on earth into a worthless draft on future happiness in the unknown and abandoned the fundamental demand of community of wealth, changing it into a community of "saints." It robbed the masses of their barely acquired intellectual freedom. It killed the very souls which it professed to save. It hurled into 1,500 years of damnation and hell the very spirit that was about to save all humanity from intellectual darkness. It buried brotherhood, peace, freedom, equality and justice for the Judas reward of private property and class rule.

Blindly the masses toiled and groaned under chattel slavery, feudal paternalism, and capitalist oppression. Here and there they stirred restlessly, but the light had gone out of their lives and the gate of knowledge was closed and bolted. Poisoned and lamed by the deceiving teachings of the ruling classes, the masses tottered along under their heavy burden and despaired or resigned themselves to their bitter fate. Instead of rallying their own manly powers and turning

to their own class for relief, they appealed with vain prayers to the alleged god of the ruling classes. But the real idol of the rulers, the golden calf, answered only the prayers of the exploiters, and devoured the toiling millions as fast as they propagated themselves.

The Reformation in Germany bound them with new fetters, instead of liberating them. Economically and politically, it aimed only at a change of masters, spiritually it made no fundamental advance. Although Luther and his disciples masqueraded in the garb of the apostle Paul and the Christian democracy, they were just such impostors as the leaders of the feudal church. Their coming did not signify liberation from spiritual fetters, but merely the disintegration of feudal ecclesiasticism and feudal religion. From a wider outlook, it indicated indeed the beginning of the disintegration of all theological religion. But this was never admitted.

Yet the history of Protestantism, meaning thereby the history of those who dissented from the Catholic church, has been a series of schisms, a process of successive disintegrations reaching into the very heart of the Catholic church itself. And this religious dissolution was but the spiritual evidence of the economic transformation.

The English Revolution of the seventeenth century was not only the signal for the rise of a new economic master, but also a proof of the continued disruption of the church. The American and French revolutions placed this new master, the bourgeoisie, still more securely on the throne and revealed at the same time that the bourgeoisie of those days had almost emancipated itself from all theological religion. Especially the French bourgeoisie demonstrated this in practice by continued attempts to rob the church of its material holdings. Let this be remembered, when the modern bourgeoisie denounces the revolutionary proletariat for being "opposed to religion." It is the bourgeoisie, which from its very birth has undermined theological religion, and if they have not abolished it entirely, this is due simply to the miserable half-heartedness which characterizes all bourgeois action, so far as it is directed against the forces of retrogression, and must in this case make the bourgeoisie impotent against the church, because the bourgeoisie cannot abolish the church without abolishing that economic injustice on which all bourgeois society rests.

The modern proletariat will merely accomplish that which the backboneless bourgeoisie began, but left unfinished. Realizing that the greatest

strength of the churches lies not in their spiritual power, but in their worldly holdings, the proletariat will strike at these. Take away the material spoils of ecclesiasticism, and you deprive the hierarchy of all religions of their basic rock. Compel each member of that hierarchy to earn an "honest" living, with no unearned increment by which to support their aristocratic organization, and the clerical power over the human mind is gone, for this power cannot stand the test of free discussion and scientific reason.

We need not wonder, then, that the first half-conscious movements of the modern proletariat at once divested themselves of that handicap, which had been the undoing of the early Christian revolution. After the French bourgeoisie had scoffed at their own god and abolished theological religion by decree of parliament, the old advice to the working class to "pray and work" had lost its backbone. The French bourgeoisie had shown that they relied more on the guillotine than on their god. Why should not the proletariat take them at their word and write upon its banners: "Ni dieu, ni maitre"—neither a god, nor a master? Work was always with them, whether they prayed or not. And when the French bourgeoisie had abolished the master

in heaven, the French proletariat set about abolishing all masters on earth.

Of course, the more farseeing of the bourgeoisie warned their atheistic colleagues not to relinquish one of their best holds on the minds of the working people. But this does not alter the fact that the revolutionary bourgeoisie wrote atheism on their tricolore. And if the modern proletariat consistently applies this revolutionary advance of the early bourgeoisie, this constitutes the logical historical progress of the modern revolution over the old, and cannot be ignored or hushed up, however much the shortsighted "Christian" or "ethical" socialists of modern times may now repeat the warnings of the one-time farsighted bourgeois elements. If the churches continue their course in the future as they have in the past, there will be no need for the victorious proletariat to abolish religion after the manner of the French bourgeoisie, for religion of the theological kind will have abolished itself, and religion without theology is historically no longer religion.

It was, under these circumstances, a decided advance that the very first movements of the modern proletariat rejected the religious note from their propaganda. But how changed the

world had become, since the proletarian mind had gone to sleep, 1,500 years before, under the narcotic influence of ruling Christianity! The Christian proletariat had found itself in a world which had been molded into one great international empire by the hands of the Cæsars, and so the Christian revolution had become international by force of circumstances. But now the world was split up into a bewildering number of disjointed nationalities, without any principle of cohesion, without an international language, and with the added difficulty of a growing antagonism between the workers of the city and those of the country.

Nor had 1,500 years of rule under the "religion of love" mitigated the despotic regulations by which the minds of the working people had been bound under feudalism. On the contrary, these regulations had been made still more ferociously cruel. The church had in every way fostered the brute in man by encouraging the spirit of overbearing mastery in the possessing classes and demanding from the working classes abject submission on penalty of unspeakable tortures on earth and in the unknown hereafter.

There was nothing else to do for the revolutionary thinkers of the working classes but to

seek shelter in secrecy, lest their loving spiritual advisers should let loose the divinely constituted beasts against them.

From the beginning of the nineteenth century to its middle, secret societies of revolutionary working men became very numerous in Europe. But even as early as 1796, the Society of Equals, headed by Babeuf, exposed the hypocrisy of the bourgeois declaration of equal rights and proclaimed that "conditional equality before the law is an illusion. So long as there is a single man on earth richer and more powerful than his equals, the equilibrium is disturbed. . . . The land belongs to no man, and its fruits belong to all."

None of these secret societies gained any political influence worth mentioning. Even when this sort of organization was at its best, it fell easily into anarchist attempts to overthrow bourgeois society by storms in a teapot, or became aimless in the hands of radical bourgeois elements. The only practical effect of this style of organization was to demonstrate the futility of isolated and premature outbursts of violence, and to train the brightest minds among its adherents for a better understanding of the problems before them.

The heroism of many of these advocates of physical force will certainly be worthy of emulation, when the hour for it will have come, but it was illtimed and useless at that early stage of proletarian life, however superior it may have been to the slavish and faint-hearted spirit of some modern labor leaders. Often such heroism was indeed born of desperation, as it was in the case of the hungering French weavers, who mounted the barricades in Lyons, in 1831, with their black flags carrying the somber inscription: "We live working or die fighting." Sometimes violence was forced upon the proletariat, as it was in Paris in the June insurrection of 1848, in the Paris Commune of 1871, and many times after down to our own time, by the insolence of the ruling classes. So much is certain: Whenever the proletariat took up arms, they acquitted themselves like men and succumbed only after desperate fighting against overwhelming odds. That is more than the bourgeoisie can say of itself. History shows that the bourgeoisie is never brave, except when the odds are unfairly in its favor.

This spirit of bravery is one of the strongest elements characteristic of the proletarian movements of all times and countries. It will not

fail us in the future, when history will call for it. That handful of Parisian proletarians in 1848 scared not only the French bourgeoisie, but the rulers of all Europe. What will the united revolution of the entire international proletariat do?

These first violent outbursts of proletarian wrath were, on the other hand, accompanied by deep studies on the part of utopian thinkers like Saint Simon, Fourier, and Owen. These men stood intellectually far above the leaders of the secret organizations, and their ideas exerted a great influence on the working classes of their time. All the revolutionary activity of any consequence in the beginning of the nineteenth century connected itself with the work of these utopians. In the writings of these men, the proletariat found the first attempts at a scientific understanding of its historical conditions and aims. Saint Simon saw dimly, that the French revolution was a series of class struggles, and that such struggles had been going on throughout the world's history so far as it was then known. And in spite of the utter incoherence of nationalities all around him, he saw the necessity of international action.

Fourier saw even more clearly than Saint Si-

mon the secret springs of social development. He announced that humanity moved upward from savagery, through barbarism and patriarchy, to civilization, and that civilization developed by means of flagrant contradictions, so that "poverty arises from affluence." No one has criticized bourgeois society more mercilessly and brilliantly than he.

Robert Owen was the first to advance a law for the restriction of female and child labor and to nurse into vigorous life the English chartist movement, the first independent movement of the industrial proletariat of England. His colony at New Lanark was a well-planned and managed attempt to emancipate the working class by means of co-operative self-help, even under the rule of the capitalist class.

Ideas similar to his found expression in Fourier's phalansteres, and in numerous smaller schemes for escaping capitalist exploitation through colonization.

Immature as these utopian ideas and actions were, they excelled in loftiness of conception, sincerity of purpose, and altruism of execution anything ever planned or undertaken by the bourgeoisie. The utopian socialists and communists of France and England have erected an immor-

tal monument in history testifying to the ineradicable "goodness" of human nature, which even several thousand years of the maddest individualist rule have been unable to deaden in the most oppressed and outraged members of society. The first pioneers of the modern proletariat, like those of the Christian proletariat, gave the lie to the childish mouthings of the ruling classes, who hypocritically bewail the "sinfulness" of all human nature, because their own, cankered by the worm of private property, has become sordid and narrowly selfish.

"Change conditions, and you change human nature." That is the refrain running through all the works of the proletarian thinkers of modern times. The bourgeoisie, on the other hand, has persisted in maintaining bad conditions and complaining about the lack of good men. Thus, in spite of the oppressive conditions surrounding them, the thinkers of the working class have acquired a superior understanding of humanity and championed a loftier morality than the upstarts of the ruling classes, who are incapable of any fundamental morality, because their very existence is an insult to morality. But there is hope even for them and their hired preachers. The proletariat will rescue them from their groveling

money greed and surround them with a social environment which will cure them of their evil nature and give even their ethical preachers a more useful and less degenerating occupation.

Just as the modern proletariat from the hour of its birth, opened the way for a natural morality by demanding the abolition of immoral class rule and exploitation, so it rose superior to the bourgeois pretense of international peace by demanding the abolition of the internal class war as the first condition of all peace. And thanks to this understanding, the revolutionary proletariat was enabled to overcome the bigoted and inhuman suggestions of bourgeois "patriotism" and to inaugurate a union of working people of all countries, determined not to make war on one another in the interest of the exploiting classes.

Did the ruling peace angels welcome this sincere international peace organization? On the contrary, the first reproach hurled by them against the peaceful working men was that they were "unpatriotic," because they refused to fight one another at the command of the lovers of peace on the thrones and the stock exchanges.

When the leaders of the Communist Club, Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, issued their famous manifesto in 1848, they replied to this charge:

"The communists are reproached with desiring to abolish countries and nationalities. The working men have no country. We cannot take from them what they have not got. . . . National differences and antagonisms between peoples are daily more and more vanishing, owing to the development of the bourgeoisie. . . . The supremacy of the proletariat will cause them to vanish still faster. United action, in the leading civilized countries at least, is one of the first conditions for the emancipation of the proletariat. . . ." And in closing their immortal document, the first scientific Declaration of Independence of the international working class, they sounded the world-encircling slogan: "The proletarians have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to gain. Working men of all countries, unite!"

The Communist Manifesto did not only proclaim the principles of international working class brotherhood, but also outlined in bold strokes the inevitable historical development by means of the class struggle, which would raise the working class to the position of the leading element on earth. Out of all the national disruption, the selfish strife of the exploiters, the sanctimonious gibberish of the ruling hierarchy,

these two proletarian thinkers lifted the mind of the working class into the heaven of a serene consciousness of its redeeming mission.

"When in the course of development, class distinctions have disappeared and all production has been concentrated in the hands of a vast association of the whole nation, the public power will lose its political character. Political power, properly so called, is merely the organized power of one class for oppressing another. If the proletariat, during its contest with the bourgeoisie, is compelled by force of circumstances to organize itself as a class, if, by means of a revolution, it makes itself the ruling class and, as such, sweeps away by force the old conditions of production, then it will, along with these conditions, have swept away the conditions for the existence of class antagonisms, and of classes generally, and will thereby have abolished its own supremacy as a class. In the place of the old bourgeois society, with its classes and class antagonisms, we shall have an association, in which the free development of each is the condition of the free development of all."

Nor were these men satisfied with the mere declaration of these principles. They eagerly watched for every opportunity to carry their prin-

ciples into practice. And when, in 1864, the conditions had become ripe for such a step, they organized the "International Working Men's Association," the first modern international center for the information and concerted action of revolutionary proletarians of all countries.

Here again the wider outlook and broader grasp of the proletarian thinkers put the feudal and bourgeois statesmen and professors to shame. While the bourgeoisie has never been able, even in its flower, to create the basis for a fraternal international understanding, the proletariat accomplished it even at the beginning of its career. And in the subsequent works of Marx and Engels, the proletariat received the fundament of a literature, which served as a scientific guide in its further development, and which the whole galaxy of bourgeois intelligence has been unable to refute.

One year before the organization of the International, Ferdinand Lassalle had organized the General Association of German Working Men. It became in time the German socialist party, the first of those revolutionary proletarian parties, which sprang into existence one after another in all capitalist countries, as soon as conditions had reached the necessary maturity. With

unfaltering perseverance and uncompromising loyalty to their principles, these parties are striving for the conquest of the political powers of the world, peacefully while they may, by force of arms if they must. And while the bourgeois parties are disintegrating and dying of corruption, the proletarian world party is growing steadily and marching straight towards its certain victory.

This is not the place to write the history of international socialism. It is enough to rejoice over the fact that the socialist parties of all modern countries have outlived years of relentless persecution and proclaim defiantly, that they will carry out to the last letter the testaments of the proletarian revolutions of past ages. Even now the Russian proletariat has inaugurated the new cycle of revolutions which will from now on sweep over the industrial countries of this globe and clear the ground for a true civilization.

Bourgeois society is in its last throes. Less than ever are the statesmen of the ruling classes able to manage social affairs so that humanity can attain to its full development. But the proletarian world has grown, until now the sun never sets in its realms. Millions of wide-awake and determined men, women, and children, clasp-

ing hands in all climes, are devoting themselves with head and heart to the upbuilding of the international commonwealth. In the International Bureau at Brussels, they have a modern and promising successor of the old International.

What the Christian proletariat dreamed, what the revolutionary serfs coveted with yearning hearts, what the heroes of the early proletarian battles in the nineteenth century consecrated with their blood, that will be triumphantly accomplished by the proletarian revolution of the twentieth century.

But the mission of the international proletariat is not exhausted with the capture of the political power, the socialization of industry and agriculture, and the inauguration of international peace. In awakening to its political mission, the proletarian mind also realizes the means by which the human mind can accomplish its mission in the universe. The international proletarian mind is the first world-wide intelligence uniting human beings for a complete conquest of the world and of the universe.

Freedom from political and economic oppression is, indeed, the indispensable basis of all human morality. But human freedom will not be full and complete, until the destructive forces of

the universe are subdued to the will of man. So long as disease and death lurk in fire, water, air, in earthquakes, floods, volcanic eruptions, collisions with other worlds, man's freedom will be at the mercy of cosmic forces. He must strive to become that cosmic force, to which all other cosmic forces will bow obediently, to which life and death will no longer be insoluble and uncontrollable mysteries.

The awakening of the proletarian mind to class-consciousness implies, historically, the birth of human world-consciousness and cosmic consciousness. Men of other classes had dreams of world-consciousness, but they never understood the historical process by which this consciousness and its ideals would be realized. It is only the victory of the proletarian revolution, which will be the signal for the revolution of the united human mind against the cosmic revolutions which threaten its survival and progress.

This is the wider and grander aim which accompanies the proletarian consciousness from its birth. And it is the noble task of the proletariat to proclaim this greatest ideal ever conceived by the human mind, an ideal which far surpasses the present powers of the human race. But the same historical law which inspires us with the firm

conviction that socialism will conquer the world, also assures us that the evolution of the human mind will inevitably produce that higher organ of intelligence which will rise supreme to all the dangers of a universe begotten of the strife of hostile elements.

The universe required æons of time to produce the first spark of human consciousness on an animal plane. Other æons passed away, before the animal-man became a class-and-world-conscious proletarian. Another immense period may be required to develop the world-conscious human mind into a universe-ruling mind. But it is the glorious destiny of the proletarian mind to rescue humanity from political and economic oppression, in order that an intelligence may develop, which shall rescue the highest product of cosmic evolution from cosmic oppression.

"Ni dieu, ni maitre!" The united human mind, lifted to world control by the proletarian revolution, will become the natural "god" of the universe and make itself master of a self-controlled universe, whose highest product it is.

Proletarians of all countries, unite! You have nothing to lose but your chains. You have a world and a universe to gain!

A PARTING WORD TO THE STUDENT AND THE CRITIC

"Where did he get his facts?" some students will ask after reading the foregoing chapters. "Why didn't he give credit to his sources?" some critics will be ready to exclaim.

For the satisfaction of these two types, I append the following remarks.

The purpose of this historical study was not to write in a learned way a detailed history of various epochs. It was rather to bring out in bold relief such facts of each epoch as I considered worthy of the special attention of the revolutionary worker. The facts mentioned in this little work are those which you will not hear proclaimed in Standard Oil universities, nor discussed in Y. M. C. A. meetings, nor made accessible to the students of the working class in Carnegie libraries. You may, perhaps, find a few isolated and obscure hints of them scattered here and there through the socalled standard histories. But in this shape those facts lose all their real

significance, or even appear perverted into their opposite.

How do I know this? The Marxian method of historical research enables me to reconstruct the entire life processes of each period by first ascertaining its productive forces (the geographical conditions, the tools, and the predominating way of securing the requirements of life) and then building upon this foundation the political institutions of that time. Given the geographical conditions, the available instruments of labor, and the prevailing mode of using them, the stage is set and the leading human actors easily fall into their places and play their economic and political roles according to their class-interests. Once these class-interests, and their economic basis, are understood, we can tell at a glance whether the actions of the great historical figures agree with their words and with the prevalent teachings of their time. We can see without fail, whether the historians of the ruling classes have told us the truth about great historical events and their prominent actors. And we can read between the lines of any records what their authors have either consciously concealed or unconsciously misapprehended. And if we can no longer ascertain the full truth in many cases, we

can at least point out that there is a clash between the fundamental facts and the official rendering.

When we realize this, we arrive at once at the stupendous conclusion that the entire human history must be rewritten from this point of view, before we shall know the real truth about past epochs. But this cannot be done by any one writer. It can be accomplished only by the cooperation of an international society of scientists and historians of the working class, the only class that is vitally interested in such a task. And all the facts required for this purpose will not be fully accessible, until the working class shall have conquered the world.

In the mean time, the workers must be given at least such broad and general sketches of the salient facts required for their present purpose as may be ascertained by the general application of the Marxian method even without full access to the diplomatic and other secret records of the ruling classes. This has been attempted more or less successfully by various socialist writers. But most of these works are not yet available in English. And the popular style of my little work forbade a detailed reference to all the many sources which contributed to my picture of his-

torical events. Besides, all of these works suffer more or less from the incompleteness of the historical material. Since all of them worked in almost untilled soil, only their general conclusions are above doubt, while in matters of detail they contain many statements which require further investigation.

Under these circumstances I did not deem it either necessary or wise to burden this work by special references to any of those comrades who had passed over some of the same ground before me. So far as their general conclusions go, every student familiar with socialist literature will easily locate what belongs to them and what is original with me. And so far as I may differ from them, it will remain for subsequent investigation to decide who is right. But the great mass of those who have neither time nor opportunity for the study of large works, and for whose special benefit this little work is written, have no immediate interest in those ulterior questions.

So I did not divert their attention from my main issue by telling them in special footnotes that the general method to which I owe my results is the epoch-making discovery of Karl Marx, and that they can find detailed proofs for some of my statements in his "Revolution and

Counter-Revolution," his "Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte," and his "Civil War in France." I did not break the continuity of my story by referring them to various untranslated articles and pamphlets of Frederick Engels and Ferdinand Lassalle. I did not tell them of Jean Jaurés' recent work on the history of France, nor of Lissagaray's "History of the Paris Commune." I did not dwell on the fact that a great deal of light is thrown on primitive and medieval social movements in Karl Kautsky's and Eduard Bernstein's joint work on "Die Vorläufer des Sozialismus," in C. Osborne Ward's "Ancient Lowly," in Lewis H. Morgan's "Ancient Society," and in Frederick Engels' "Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State," nor did I surprise them by the assurance that I find a great deal of my evidence scattered through the Old and New Testament.

But why prolong this list? It is out of the question to make it complete. For aside from purely scientific and historical works, I owe much of my insight into former historical epochs to folk-lore, ancient songs, and even to works of fiction. In this connection I cannot refrain from informing those who have read Lew Wallace's "Ben Hur" and Sienkiewicz's "Quo Vadis"